FULL 52 PAGES
SUPER-MYSTERY COMICS
10¢
LET'S SEE YOU GET OUT OF THIS MACK MARTIN!!
THE UNKNOWN'S LATEST THRILLER "DESERT GOLD"
ALSO
MACK MARTIN IN "THE RIDDLE OF THE ROWBOAT"
PLUS
BERT AND SUE
HURRY-UP HARRIGAN AND MR. RISK

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The UNKNOWN

IN DESERT GOLD

GOLD! IT'S MINE! ALL MINE!

SID GREENE

FRIENDS, HERE'S A STORY ABOUT GOLD-HUNGRY MEN IN SEARCH OF ANOTHER MAN'S HIDDEN TREASURE! EVERYTHING CAN HAPPEN IN A SITUATION LIKE THAT, AND AS YOU SHALL SOON SEE... EVERYTHING *DOES!*

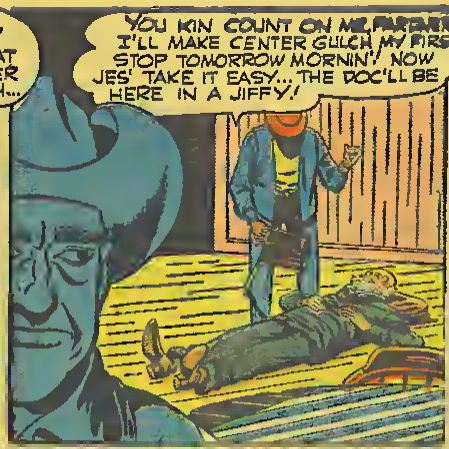
OUR STORY BEGINS IN THE CROSSROADS TOWN OF *DESERT JUNCTION.*

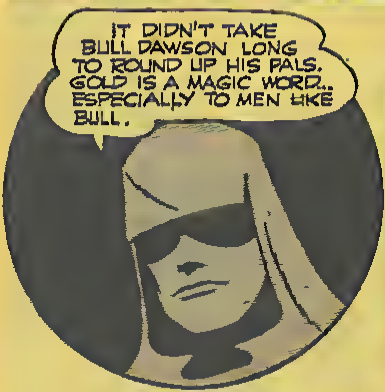
WELL, SANDERS, TOMORROW MORNIN' WE HEADS IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS IT WAS MIGHTY KIND OF YOU TO DROP ME AT DESERT JUNCTION.

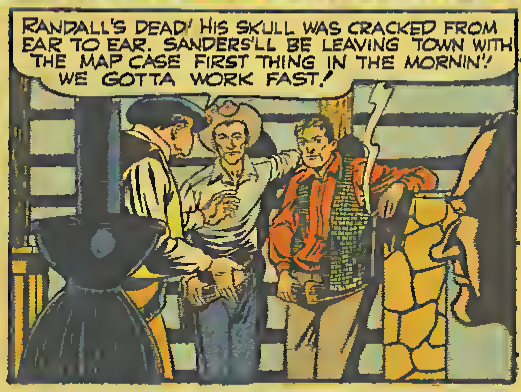
IF I'M NOT TOO CURIOUS, WHAT'RE YOU AIMIN' TO FIND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BLAZIN' DESERT?

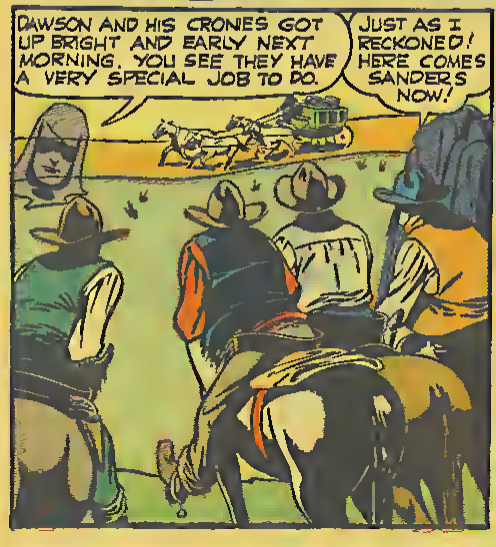
WATCH YOUR TONGUE, RANDALL THAT'S BULL DAWSON BEHIND YOU I WOULDN'T TALK MUCH WITH HIM AROUND
I'M GONNA LET YOU IN ON A SECRET, SANDERS. I BEEN PROSPECTIN' GOLD FOR A LONG TIME AND GOT A HEAP OF IT HID IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT. AND NOW I'M GOIN' THAR TO BRING IT BACK.
SUDDENLY...
GET YORE HANDS UP, MEN! THIS SHOOTIN-IRON MAKES A MIGHTY BIG HOLE!
RECKON I'LL START WITH YOU, OL' MAN! WHAT'S IN THAT MAP CASE?
NO! NOT THE MAP CASE!
THERE MUST BE SOMETHIN' IMPORTANT INSIDE IF YOU WANT IT SO BAD!
CLUNK!
SAY! WHAT'S GOIN' ON IN HERE?
REACH FOR YORE GUN, SHERIFF, AFORE THIS VARMINT DROPS YA! IT'S A HOLD-UP!
THERE HE GOES, SHERIFF!
HALT, YOU POLE-CAT... OR I'LL SHOOT!

EASY GUS THE SHERIFF CAUGHT THAT CARRION-EATIN' COYOTE WHO SLUGGED YOU!
I RECKON... I'M A GONER, SANDERS. I'M ASKIN A LAST FAVOR... DELIVER THAT MAP CASE TO MY BROTHER CARLYLE, IN CENTER GULCH... IT'S THE MAP TO THE HIDDEN GOLD!

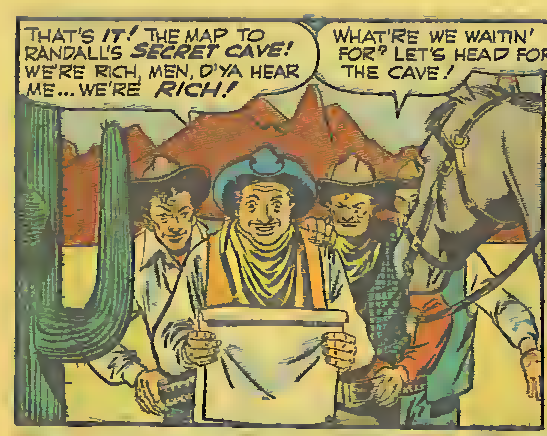

YOU KIN COUNT ON ME, PARDNER. I'LL MAKE CENTER GULCH MY FIRST STOP TOMORROW MORNIN'! NOW JES' TAKE IT EASY... THE DOC'LL BE HERE IN A JIFFY!

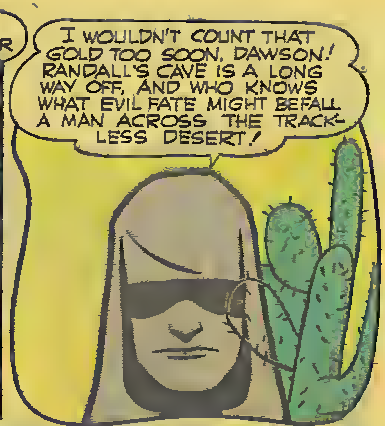

IT DIDN'T TAKE BULL DAWSON LONG TO ROUND UP HIS PALS. GOLD IS A MAGIC WORD... ESPECIALLY TO MEN LIKE BULL.


RANDALL'S DEAD! HIS SKULL WAS CRACKED FROM EAR TO EAR. SANDERS'LL BE LEAVING TOWN WITH THE MAP CASE FIRST THING IN THE MORNIN'! WE GOTTA WORK FAST!

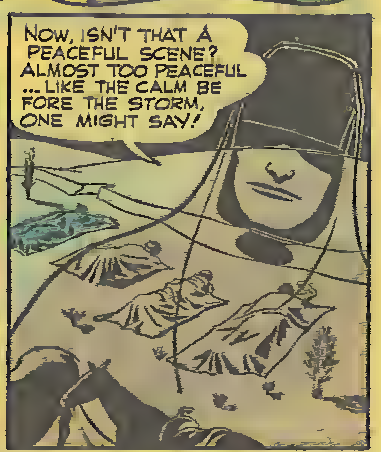

DAWSON AND HIS CRONIES GOT UP BRIGHT AND EARLY NEXT MORNING. YOU SEE THEY HAVE A VERY SPECIAL JOB TO DO.
JUST AS I RECKONED! HERE COMES SANDERS NOW!

YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH THIS! I'M CARRYIN' U.S. MAIL IN THIS HERE STAGE COACH!
SHUT YORE TRAP AN' HAND OVER THAT MAP CASE! YOU MENTION ONE WORD OF THIS IN TOWN AN' YOU'LL NEVER LIVE TO HEAR YORE ECHO! NOW—GIT!

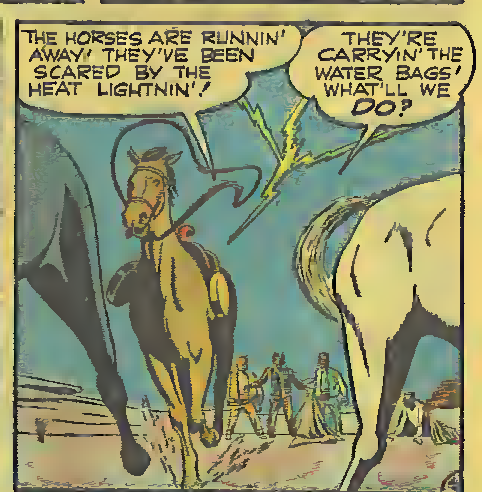

THAT'S IT! THE MAP TO RANDALL'S SECRET CAVE! WE'RE RICH, MEN, D'YA HEAR ME... WE'RE RICH!
WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' FOR? LET'S HEAD FOR THE CAVE!

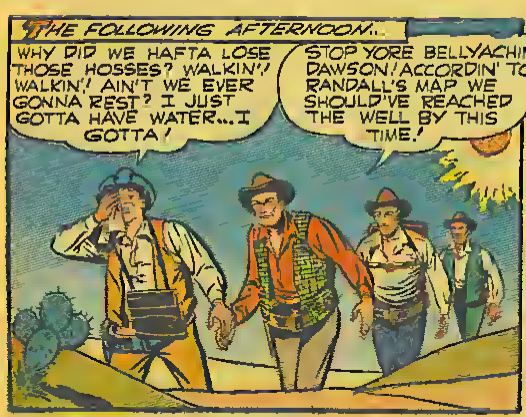

I WOULDN'T COUNT THAT GOLD TOO SOON, DAWSON! RANDALL'S CAVE IS A LONG WAY OFF, AND WHO KNOWS WHAT EVIL FATE MIGHT BEFALL A MAN ACROSS THE TRACKLESS DESERT!

THAT EVENING...
I'M ALL DONE IN! LET'S GET SOME SHUTEYE.
YEAH, I'M READY TO DROP MYSELF! WITH A GOOD NIGHT'S REST, WE OUGHTA REACH THE CAVE SOMETIME TOMORROW!

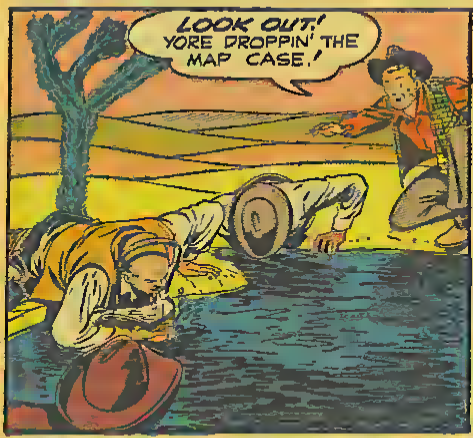

NOW, ISN'T THAT A PEACEFUL SCENE? ALMOST TOO PEACEFUL ... LIKE THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM, ONE MIGHT SAY!

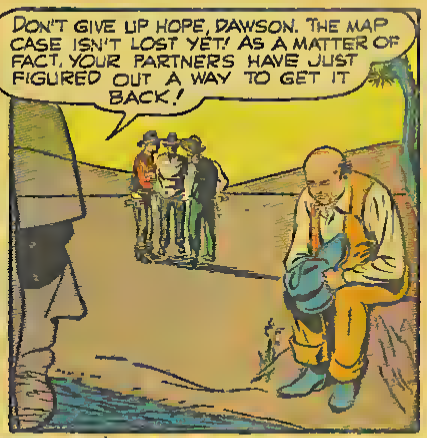
THEN...


THE HORSES ARE RUNNIN' AWAY! THEY'VE BEEN SCARED BY THE HEAT LIGHTNIN'!
THEY'RE CARRYIN' THE WATER BAGS! WHAT'LL WE DO?


THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON...
WHY DID WE HAFTA LOSE THOSE HOSSES? WALKIN'! WALKIN'! AIN'T WE EVER GONNA REST? I JUST GOTTA HAVE WATER...I GOTTA!
STOP YORE BELLYACHIN', DAWSON! ACCORDIN' TO RANDALL'S MAP WE SHOULD'VE REACHED THE WELL BY THIS TIME!

THE WATER HOLE! THERE!


LOOK OUT! YORE DROPPIN' THE MAP CASE!


DON'T GIVE UP HOPE, DAWSON. THE MAP CASE ISN'T LOST YET! AS A MATTER OF FACT, YOUR PARTNERS HAVE JUST FIGURED OUT A WAY TO GET IT BACK!

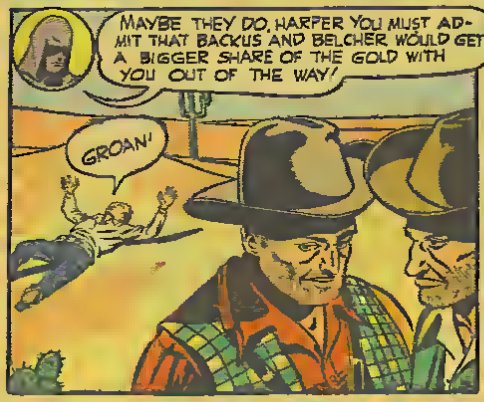
DAWSON, WE TALKED IT OVER AND YOU BEEN ELECTED TO DIVE IN AFTER THAT CASE!
H-H-HAVE A HEART, BACKUS! I KIN HARDLY SWIM! D'YA WANT ME TO DROWN?

CONGRATULATIONS, DAWSON! THANKS TO YOUR EXPERT DIVING, THE MAP IS SAFE... BUT ARE YOU?
I GOT IT! I GOT THE MAP CASE! GIMME YORE HAND, BACKUS!
SURE, DAWSON, HERE'S MY HAND!

JUST TO BE EXTRA HELPFUL, HERE'S MY OTHER HAND!
CRACK!
TOO BAD, DAWSON! BUT THERE'S ONE CONSOLATION... YOU'LL NEVER GET THIRSTY AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS POND!
THE NEXT MORNING...
WE BETTER GET GOIN'! WE GOT A LONG TREK AHEAD UV US!
NOW WE'LL ONLY HAVE TO SPLIT THAT GOLD THREE WAYS!
LATER...
YOU GUYS BETTER GO EASY ON THE CHOW, THERE AIN'T MUCH LEFT.
SO WHAT? DIDN'T RANDALL WRITE ON THE MAP THAT HE HAD A HEAP O' GRUB STORED AWAY IN THE CAVE?
ANYHOW, NOW WE GOT DAWSON'S SHARE OF THE VITTLES TO COUNT ON. HA-HA! EVERY TIME I THINK OF THAT CHUMP I HAFTA LAUGH! HAW! HAW! HAW!
LAUGH, HARPER. IT WAS VERY FUNNY, WASN'T IT? BUT THIS MIGHT BE YOUR LAST LAUGH!
RATTLE RATTLE

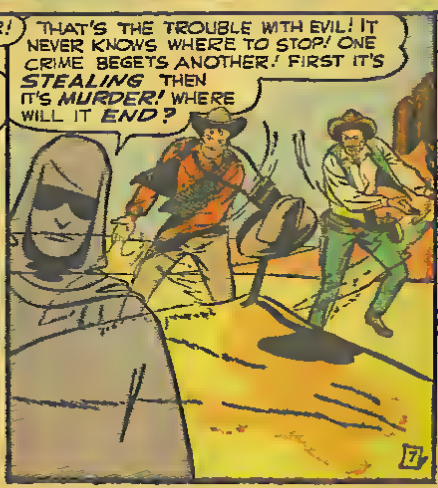
YEOW

THAT RATTLER GAVE YOU A MEAN BITE, HARPER! YOU'RE IN PURTY BAD SHAPE!
HURRY UP AN' DO SOMETHIN'... DO YOU WAN'T ME TO DIE?

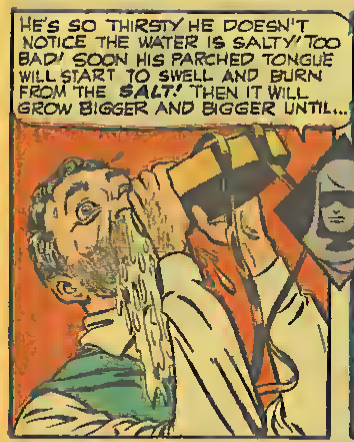

MAYBE THEY DO, HARPER YOU MUST ADMIT THAT BACKUS AND BELCHER WOULD GET A BIGGER SHARE OF THE GOLD WITH YOU OUT OF THE WAY!
GROAN!

H-HELP ME! PLEASE DON'T LET ME DIE. I'M YOUR PARTNER!

YOU AIN'T GONNA BE OUR PARDNER LONG, HARPER! SURE, WE COULD SAVE YA BY SUCKIN' OUT THE POISON! BUT SOMEHOW, BELCHER AN' ME AIN'T VERY THIRSTY!
SEND US YORE ADDRESS, HARPER. MEBBE WE'LL MAIL YA THE GOLD! HA! HA!

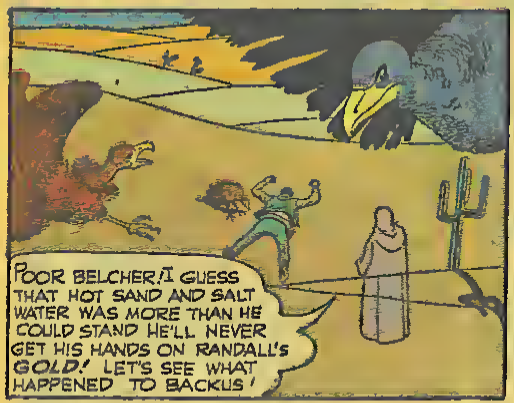

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH EVIL! IT NEVER KNOWS WHERE TO STOP! ONE CRIME BEGETS ANOTHER! FIRST IT'S STEALING THEN IT'S MURDER! WHERE WILL IT END?

THAT NIGHT.
I CAN'T GET OVER THE LOONY LOOK ON HARPER'S FACE WHEN HE SAW WE WUZ GONNA LET HIM CROAK! MAYBE WE SHOULD'VE...
SHUT UP AND GET SOME SLEEP, BELCHER! NOW WE SPLIT ONLY TWO WAYS!
COME, COME, GENTLEMEN! TOMORROW'S A BIG DAY AND YOU'D BETTER TRY TO SLEEP. YOU'VE HAD YOUR EYES OPEN FOR SIX HOURS! DON'T YOU TRUST EACH OTHER?
BELCHER DOZED OFF JUST IN TIME, EH, BACKUS? A FEW MINUTES MORE AND IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN YOU! AHH... PRETTY CLEVER... A SALT TABLET IN HIS WATER! PRETTY CLEVER, BACKUS!
Z-Z-Z-Z-Z
NOON... THE FOLLOWING DAY...
GOSH, IT'S HOT! I MUST'VE OVERSLEPT! I BETTER PUT MY SHOES ON QUICK AFORE MY FEET GET SCORCHED! THE SAND IS HOTTER'N A FIRECRACKER!
MY SHOES! THEY'RE GONE!
BACKUS! THAT DIRTY, CONNIVIN' CROOK! WALKED OUT ON ME! AN' HE TOOK MY SHOES WITH 'IM!
LUCKY THE CANTEEN IS FASTENED TO MY BELT OR HE WOULD'VE STOLE THE WATER, TOO!


HE'S SO THIRSTY HE DOESN'T NOTICE THE WATER IS SALTY! TOO BAD! SOON HIS PARCHED TONGUE WILL START TO SWELL AND BURN FROM THE SALT! THEN IT WILL GROW BIGGER AND BIGGER UNTIL...

M-MY TONGUE... GASPS I CAN'T BREATHE! GASPS I'M CHOKING! KAFF, KAFF!

OW-OW OW-OW


POOR BELCHER! I GUESS THAT HOT SAND AND SALT WATER WAS MORE THAN HE COULD STAND HE'LL NEVER GET HIS HANDS ON RANDALL'S GOLD! LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENED TO BACKUS!

I... CAN'T... QUIT... NOW! PANT, PANTS I... GOTTA... MAKE IT!

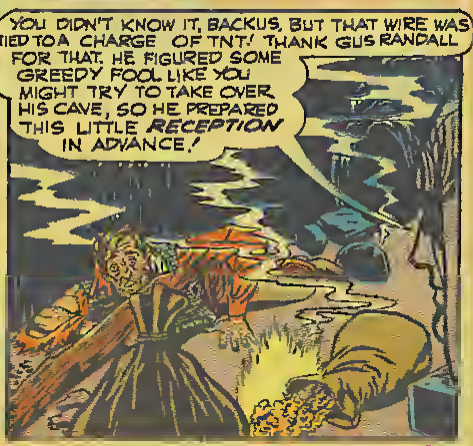
THE CAVE! RANDALL'S CAVE!

IT'S MOVING! GASPS IN A MINUTE I'LL HAVE... THE G-GOLD!

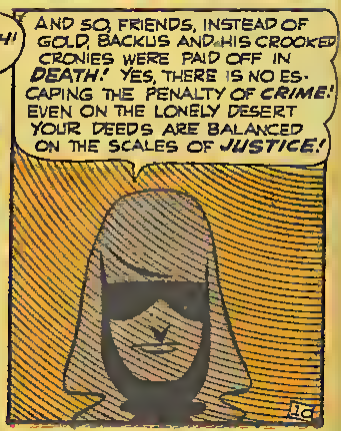
AT LAST! BAGS AND BAGS OF GOLD! AND IT ALL BELONGS TO ME!

CAREFUL, BACKUS!

BOOM!


YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT, BACKUS, BUT THAT WIRE WAS TIED TO A CHARGE OF TNT! THANK GUS RANDALL FOR THAT. HE FIGURED SOME GREEDY FOOL LIKE YOU MIGHT TRY TO TAKE OVER HIS CAVE, SO HE PREPARED THIS LITTLE RECEPTION IN ADVANCE!

THE IRONY OF IT ALL! IF YOUR THREE PARTNERS WERE ALIVE, THEY COULD DIG YOU OUT OF THIS DEATH! BUT THANKS TO YOU, BACKUS, THEY'RE NOT! AND NOW YOU LIE GASPING FOR BREATH, ALONE AND HELPLESS IN AN AIRLESS CAVE... A VICTIM OF YOUR OWN GREED!
GASP
GASP


AND SO, FRIENDS, INSTEAD OF GOLD, BACKUS AND HIS CROOKED CRONIES WERE PAID OFF IN DEATH! YES, THERE IS NO ESCAPING THE PENALTY OF CRIME! EVEN ON THE LONELY DESERT YOUR DEEDS ARE BALANCED ON THE SCALES OF JUSTICE!

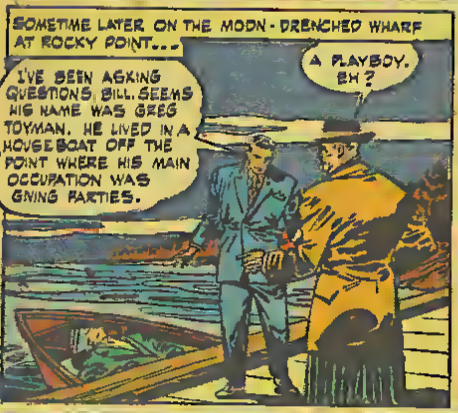
MACK MARTIN
PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

A MAN WAS FLOATING IN A ROWBOAT AND MACK MARTIN WAS FLOATING IN A GIRL'S ARMS WHEN MURDER BROKE UP THE PRETTY PICTURE ... A MURDER THAT ALSO THREATENED TO PUT MACK MARTIN ... TOP PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR, ON THE DEATH PARADE -- IN A NEW SPINE-TINGLING CASE CALLED..

"THE RIDDLE IN THE ROWBOAT"

SHOT IN THE CHEST! CLOTHES DRY... WAIT! HIS SHIRT... SOAKING WET! FUNNY... VERY FUNNY!

BETTER BUZZ BILL WILLIAMS AND TIP HIM OFF ABOUT THIS. I'LL TOW THE BOAT TO THE WHARF. YOU GRAB A TAXI, GERTIE, AND TOODLE HOME.
HOME? GEE WHIZ... MACK! I'M STILL YOUR SECRETARY! OHH..DARN! I NEVER HAVE FUN!


SOMETIME LATER ON THE MOON-DRENCHED WHARF AT ROCKY POINT...
I'VE BEEN ASKING QUESTIONS, BILL. SEEMS HIS NAME WAS GREG TOYMAN. HE LIVED IN A HOUSEBOAT OFF THE POINT WHERE HIS MAIN OCCUPATION WAS GNING PARTIES.
A PLAYBOY, EH?

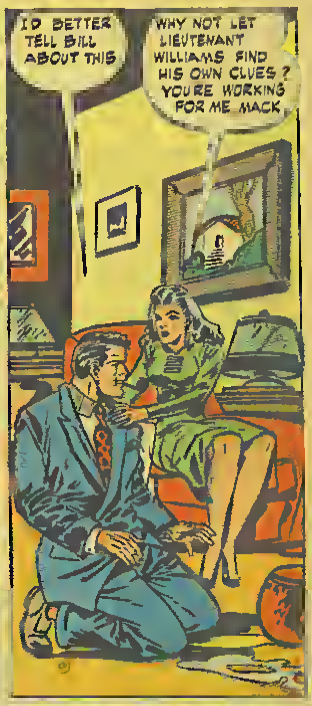
HAVE TO TAKE A LOOK AROUND THAT HOUSEBOAT. I PHONED THE EX-MRS TOYMAN FOR PERMISSION.
COULD THIS BE THE WIDOW?

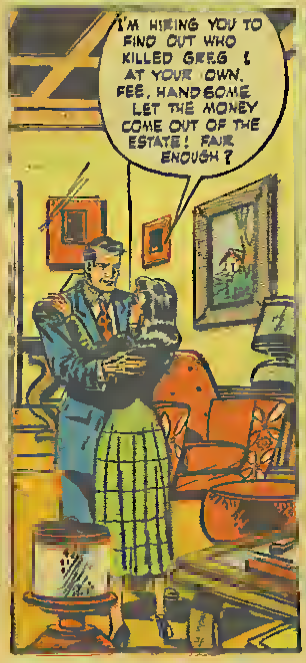
OF COURSE YOU CAN GO OUT TO THE HOUSEBOAT, LIEUTENANT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'LL BE GLAD TO TAKE BOTH OF YOU!
NICE AND COOPERATIVE, EH BILL?
YEAHH!

ON THE HOUSEBOAT
WHO'S THIS?
BETTY ISLIP, MY HUSBAND'S SECRETARY. MY EX-HUSBAND HAD A DEFINITE YEN FOR HER!

DO YOU THINK SHE'S AS PRETTY AS I AM, MACK?
YOU REALLY HAVE IT, BABY. I GUESS YOU'RE MY TYPE... OOOPS!

WET SPOTS ... WATER! NOW WHO'D GO AROUND TRACKING UP A BEDROOM RUG LIKE THIS?
GREG WAS VERY STRICT, MACK. NO ONE WAS ALLOWED TO RUN AROUND AFTER A SWIM. HE HAD SPECIAL DRESSING ROOMS.


I'D BETTER TELL BILL ABOUT THIS
WHY NOT LET LIEUTENANT WILLIAMS FIND HIS OWN CLUES? YOU'RE WORKING FOR ME, MACK.

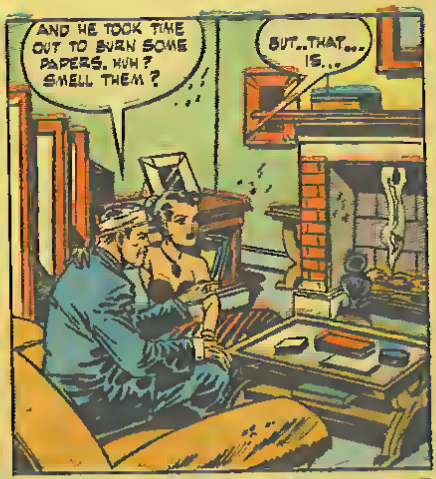

I'M HIRING YOU TO FIND OUT WHO KILLED GREG! AT YOUR OWN FEE, HANDSOME. LET THE MONEY COME OUT OF THE ESTATE! FAIR ENOUGH?

OHHHH! ..SORRY!
PLENTY FAIR, BABY...

I'M SAUNDERS THE BUTLER SIR I CAME RIGHT OVER WHEN I HEARD THE TERRIBLE NEWS.
BUTLER HUH? KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MR TOYMAN'S AFFAIRS? DID ANYTHING HAPPEN AT THE PARTY TONIGHT?

ER..YES..SOMETHING DID! HE HAD TWO BITTER QUARRELS, ONE WITH TED SLOAN, HIS PARTNER, WHO ACCUSED HIM OF, ER, CHEATING IN BUSINESS. THE OTHER ALTERCATION WAS WITH TIM MOORE, OVER MISS BETTY ISLIP.
IF YOU MEANT THAT PATTER ABOUT HIRING ME, BABY... I REALLY OUGHT TO FOLLOW UP A HUNCH I HAVE.... BY VISITING MISS ISLIP.
I MEANT IT, MACK, AND TO PROVE IT...
LATER, AT BETTY ISLIP'S APARTMENT...
HMM! NOBODY ANSWERED. DOOR'S NOT LOCKED EITHER. OH, WELL... GUESS I CAN WAIT AROUND FOR BETTY ISLIP TO SHOW.
AS MACK MARTIN OPENS PAIN-GLAZED EYES....
WHEW- SO THIS IS HEAVEN - AND YOU'RE ONE OF THE ANGELS, EH ?
NO I. I FOUND YOU ON THE FLOOR. HURT! NOW LIE STILL! THIS COLD CLOTH WILL HELP. I ER, JUST GOT HOME.. MRS TOYMAN WANTED ME TO STAY AT HER PLACE, BUT SHE WAS CALLED AWAY.

ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT YOU DIDN'T BOP ME, SWEETHEART? YOU MEAN THERE WAS A PROWLER IN HERE?
PROWLER? YES THAT'S IT! THERE MUST'VE BEEN A ROBBER OR...A THIEF...


AND HE TOOK TIME OUT TO BURN SOME PAPERS, HUH? SMELL THEM?
BUT...THAT... IS...

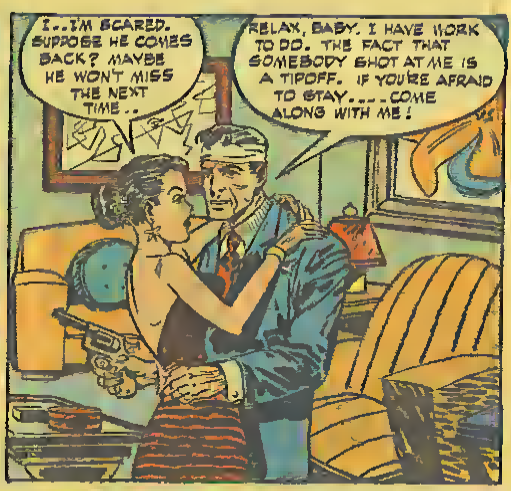
SKIP IT, SISTER. YOU DON'T LIE SO GOOD. I CAN RE-CONSTRUCT THIS CHARRED PAPER, THOUGH. I'LL KNOW WHETHER THEY IMPLICATE YOU IN GREG TOYMAN'S MURDER!
MUR-MURDER?

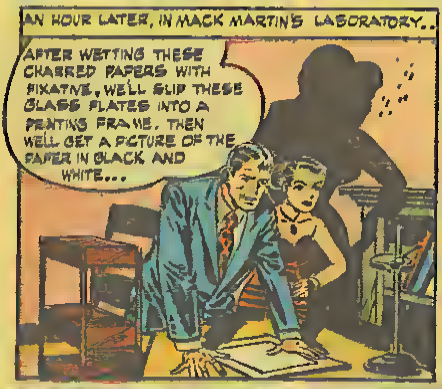
SOMEONE KILLED.. MR. TOYMAN? THAT'S HORRIBLE! HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
A GUN WENT OFF AND HE STOPPED THE BULLET. I'M TRYING TO FIND THE HAND THAT HELD THE GUN!

WATCH IT, SISTER!
EEEEEHHHH!
BANG
BANG

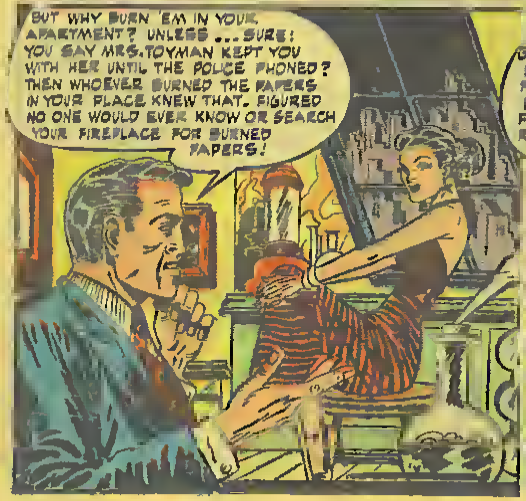
WHOEVER IT WAS IS PROBABLY HOT FOOTING IT SOMEWHERE ELSE! BUT JUST TO PLAY SAFE, I'LL PLAY TRIGGER-HAPPY TOO!
WHO-WHO-WANTS TO KI-KILL ME?

DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF, SISTER. THAT SHOT WAS FOR ME! FROM THE DOORWAY THE WOULD-BE KILLER COULDN'T SEE YOU. YOU WERE HIDDEN BY THE SCREEN..
OHHH!


I..I'M SCARED. SUPPOSE HE COMES BACK? MAYBE HE WON'T MISS THE NEXT TIME..
RELAX, BABY. I HAVE WORK TO DO. THE FACT THAT SOMEBODY SHOT AT ME IS A TIPOFF. IF YOU'RE AFRAID TO STAY....COME ALONG WITH ME!


AN HOUR LATER, IN MACK MARTIN'S LABORATORY..
AFTER WETTING THESE CHARRED PAPERS WITH FIXATIVE, WE'LL SLIP THESE GLASS PLATES INTO A PRINTING FRAME. THEN WE'LL GET A PICTURE OF THE PAPER IN BLACK AND WHITE...

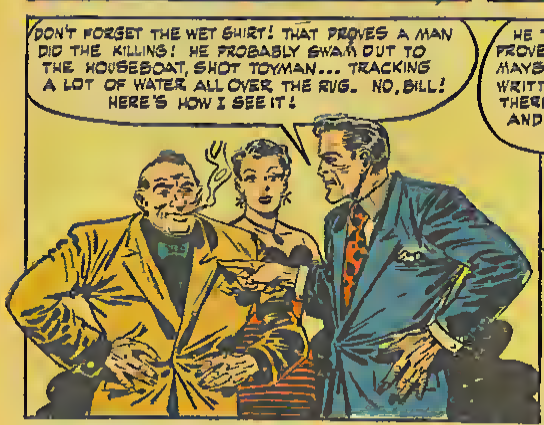
IT'S A LEDGER SHEET!
OHH! IT'S TED SLOANS HAND-WRITING! GREG THOUGHT HE WAS CHEATING THE FIRM. IT LOOKS AS IF SLOAN IS THE GUILTY PARTY!

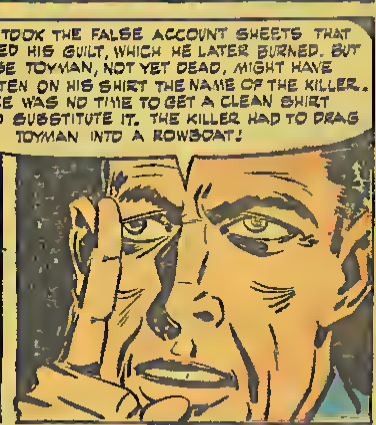

BUT WHY BURN 'EM IN YOUR APARTMENT? UNLESS ...SURE! YOU SAY MRS. TOYMAN KEPT YOU WITH HER UNTIL THE POLICE PHONED? THEN WHOEVER BURNED THE PAPERS IN YOUR PLACE KNEW THAT. FIGURED NO ONE WOULD EVER KNOW OR SEARCH YOUR FIREPLACE FOR BURNED PAPERS!

AS DAWN TINTS THE STREETS OF THE CITY..
GOT SOME NEWS FOR YOU, BILL. SLOAN WAS FALSIFYING THE RECORD BOOKS ON TOYMAN. I FOUND THE CHARRED REMNANTS IN MISS ISLIP'S FIREPLACE..
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO KNOW!

I'M ARRESTING YOU FOR TOYMAN'S MURDER, BABY. GOOD WORK, MACK. SHE'S THE ANSWER TO THE RIDDLE!
ARE YOU NUTS? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK BETTY DID IT?

SHE DIDN'T GET HOME UNTIL AFTER YOU CAME TO HER PLACE. PLENTY OF TIME AND OPPORTUNITY! THE FACT THAT PAPERS WERE BURNED AT HER PLACE SHOWS SHE WAS IN CAHOOTS WITH SLOAN. GOOD MOTIVE! SLOAN PROMISED HER A SHARE OF THE SWAG!


DON'T FORGET THE WET SHIRT! THAT PROVES A MAN DID THE KILLING! HE PROBABLY SWAM OUT TO THE HOUSEBOAT, SHOT TOYMAN... TRACKING A LOT OF WATER ALL OVER THE RUG. NO, BILL! HERE'S HOW I SEE IT!


HE TOOK THE FALSE ACCOUNT SHEETS THAT PROVED HIS GUILT, WHICH HE LATER BURNED. BUT MAYBE TOYMAN, NOT YET DEAD, MIGHT HAVE WRITTEN ON HIS SHIRT THE NAME OF THE KILLER. THERE WAS NO TIME TO GET A CLEAN SHIRT AND SUBSTITUTE IT. THE KILLER HAD TO DRAG TOYMAN INTO A ROWBOAT!

IN THE ROWBOAT, HE PUT HIS OWN SHIRT, STILL WET FROM HIS SWIM-ON TOYMAN... CAST THE BOAT ADRIFT... AND SWAM TO SHORE... WEARING THE DEAD MAN'S SHIRT..
IT FITS BECAUSE YOU MAKE IT FIT! BUT THE KILLER HAD TO HAVE AN ACCOMPLICE. I SAY IT WAS BETTY!

I HAVE AN IDEA. LET BETTY GO, AND I'LL TELL IT TO YOU. I NEVER GAVE YOU A BUM STEER YET, BILL!
HMMM... WELL.. WE'LL TRY IT. I CAN ALWAYS PUT THE FINGER ON HER.

NEXT AFTERNOON....
THOUGHT I'D BETTER MAKE A REPORT TO YOU. WE'RE MAKING PROGRESS. BETTY IGUP IS DEFINATELY IMPLICATED... BUT WE HAVE TO GET PROOF.
OH? HOW WILL YOU DO THAT?

I WAS COUNTING ON YOU TO HELP ME. IF YOU THREW A PARTY AND I BROUGHT HER TO IT!... I'VE AN IDEA THAT I CAN BREAK HER INTO A CONFESSION.
WHAT-EVER YOU SAY, MACK!

THAT NIGHT. AT THE "SURPRISE" PARTY....
TIME FOR OUR LITTLE GAME, GWEN. I'M ALL SET FOR THE BARBER ROLE
SOUNDS LIKE A SILLY GAME, BUT... GO AHEAD, MACK!

YOU'RE FIRST, BABY!
TEE... HEE...

MR. SLOAN, JUST A SNIP... EASY! IT'S JUST FOR A NEW GAME!
HA! HA! GO RIGHT AHEAD, MACK!

DON'T YOU DARE SPOIL MY HAIRDO!
WELL, BETTY OL' GIRL, HERE GOES...

LAYER...
AND NOW FOR ANOTHER GAME. MACK, WILL YOU TAKE OVER?
YOU BET! BECAUSE NOW I HAVE PROOF THAT TED SLOAN MURDERED GREG TOYMAN...!

YOU LIAR!
HERE'S THE PROOF, SLOAN. THIS SNIPPING OF YOUR HAIR WAS CRUSTED WITH SALT! DRIED SALT FROM SALT WATER... BECAUSE YOU SWAM OUT TO THE HOUSE-BOAT TO SHOOT GREG TOYMAN!

HE HAD THE GOODS ON YOU WITH THOSE ACCOUNTS YOU FALSIFIED. YOU HAD TO KILL HIM...OR GO TO JAIL...OH, NO, YOU DON'T!
OOOFF!!

DON'T GO, BABY! YOU'RE IN ON THIS, TOO! ONLY YOU KNEW I WENT TO SEE BETTY. YOU FOLLOWED... SHOT AT ME... HOPING TO KILL ME AND FRAME BETTY!

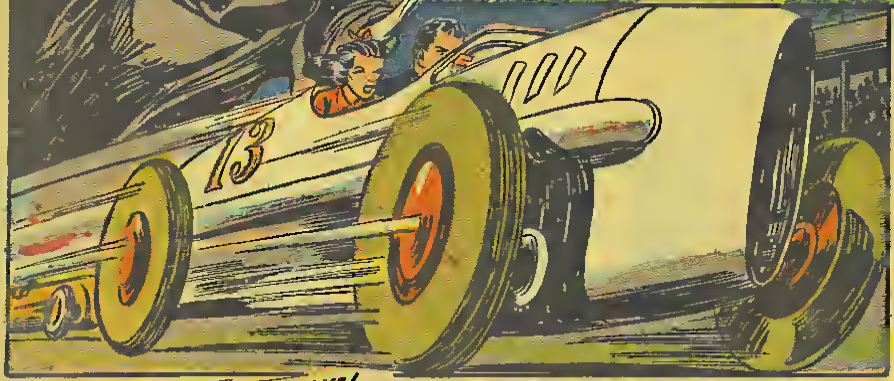
YOU WANTED TO GET RID OF YOUR HUSBAND BECAUSE HE FELL IN LOVE WITH BETTY. IF YOU AND SLOAN COULD FRAME BETTY FOR THAT MURDER, AND MINE, YOU'D BOTH HAVE YOUR REVENGE!
L-LET ME GO... YOU...!

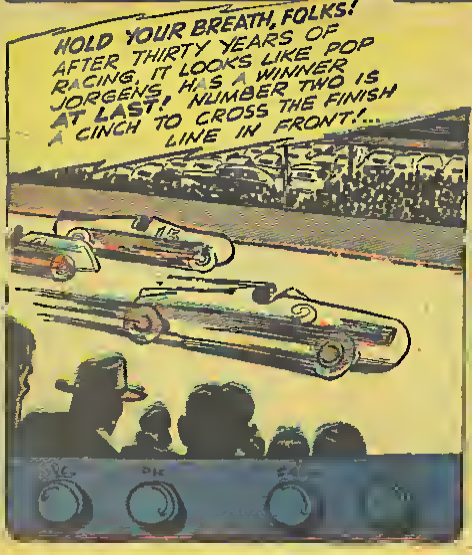
NICE GOING, MACK, I COULDN'T DO BETTER MYSELF! WHAT NOW?
I'M STARTING A PARTY OF MY OWN, BUT FIRST I GOTTA PHONE GERTIE!

BERT AND SUE

in "SATAN SCORCHES THE TRACK!"

The odds are on Murder in this hair-raising race between Death and Bert and Sue! Terror burns the breeze as the amateur sleuths race a phantom killer right down to the checkered flag! Hold on to your hats! We're going to follow Bert and Sue's most baffling mystery as it roars along at breakneck speed with every split-second crammed with chills and spills!





AND THERE'S THE FIRST ACCIDENT IN THE FAMOUS SPEEDWAYS HANDICAP!

H-HOW AWFUL!

THAT POOR DRIVER HASN'T GOT A CHANCE! IT'S PART OF THE GAME, SUE!

SOBE...I KNOW... BUT TELEVISION ISN'T LIKE WATCHING A MOVIE. IT'S SO TERRIBLY *REAL!*

SHUT IT OFF, BERT. I THINK I'VE SEEN ENOUGH!

JUST IMAGINE WHAT *POP JORGENS* HAS SEEN IN THIRTY YEARS OF RACING. POOR POP! I FEEL SORRY FOR HIM, TOO. HE HAD HIS FIRST WIN IN THE PALM OF HIS HAND AND THEN...

TELL YOU WHAT, SUSIE! LET'S GO OUT AND CHEER POP UP. I MET HIM YEARS AGO WHEN I SKETCHED SPORTS FOR THE SPORT PAGES!

OKAY, HONEY. I'M YOURS TO COMMAND!

LATER...ON THE HIGHWAY TO ZENOPOLIS... MECCA OF AMERICAN AUTO RACING...

POP'S REGISTERED AT THE ZENOPOLIS HOTEL. WE CAN PUT UP THERE, HONEY, AND TAKE IN THE REST OF THE RACES!

I HOPE POP HAS BETTER LUCK!

YOU HEARD ME — NO ACCIDENT CAN STOP POP JORGENS! SMILEY ROGERS WILL HOOK HER IN HIGH FOR ME TOMORROW, RIGHT, SMILEY?

YOU BET, POP! FRED HAD BAD LUCK, THAT'S ALL!

THERE'S POP NOW, SUE ... THAT OLD BOY SURROUNDED BY REPORTERS!

I ALWAYS KNEW BERT HAD AN EYE FOR A PRETTY GIRL, BUT HE MUST'VE HAD *BOTH* EYES OPEN WHEN HE HOOKED YOU, MA'AM!

DON'T WORRY, POP... THAT EYE OF BERT'S NEVER SLEEPS WHEN A PRETTY GAL WALKS BY!

HONEY, HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? *LMM...*

I'LL CLOSE THAT EYE ONE OF THESE DAYS... WITH A SKILLET!

OUCH! POP, HOW'D THAT ACCIDENT HAPPEN?

IT WAS NO ACCIDENT! IT WAS MURDER!

THAT'S SPEED SORGIN, THE DIRTIEST OPERATOR IN THE GAME. SPEED WOULD STOP AT NOTHIN' TO WIN. JUST LOOK AT HIM LAUGH!

I HEAR YER RACE AGAIN TOMORROW, POP. A GUY WITH THIRTY YEARS BAD LUCK GOT A CHANCE FOR NOTHIN' BUT CRACK UPS! HEH-HEH!

WHAT A CREEP HE IS! I WONDER...

UH-UH! SORGIN COULDN'T KILL TUMAY OR DAMAGE POP'S CAR BY REMOTE CONTROL.

I AIN'T NO DETECTIVE, BERT. BUT I'M SURE SORGIN HAD SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH IT.

THE NEXT DAY, AT FAMOUS SPEEDWAYS...

PSST, BERT... THAT'S "CASH" HIRES, THE DIRTIEST BOOKIE FROM HIALEAH TO SANTA ANITA. HE'S GIVING THE LONGEST ODDS THAT POP DOESN'T WIN!

LET'S SEE WHAT MAKES HIM SO SURE?

Pop Jorge

HOW COME YOU'RE GIVING 10 TO 1 ODDS AGAINST POP JORGENS WHEN THE OFFICIAL QUOTATION IS ONLY 4 TO 1?

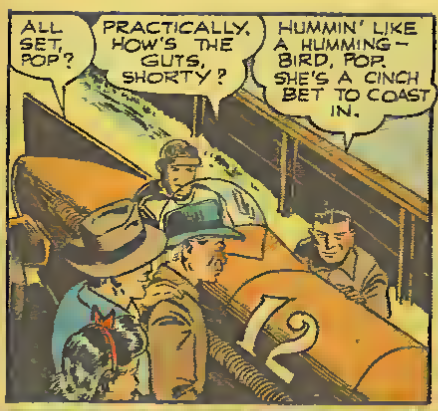
MAYBE HE HAS IT FIXED SO HE CAN'T LOSE, HUH, CASH?

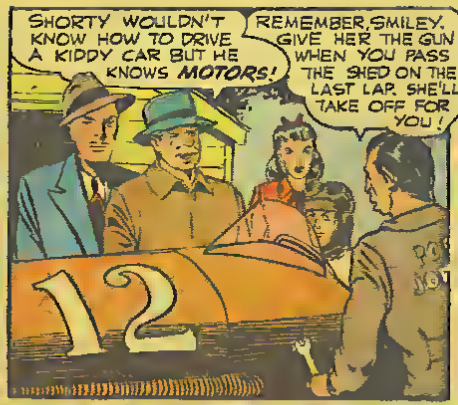
LADY LUCK DOES ALL THE FIXIN' FOR ME, BABY!

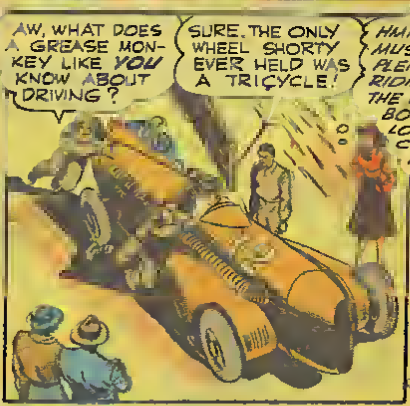
BETTIN' AGAINST POP AIN'T A GAMBLE, IT'S A SURE THING! HOW MANY MILLIONS SHALL I PUT YOU DOWN FOR, BUDDY?

I ONLY CARRY SMALL CHANGE! BUT IF YOU TRY TO RIG THIS RACE AGAINST POP YOU'LL WIND UP WITH A MILLION YEARS IN JAIL!

LET'S GO, BERT. THIS ISN'T MY SLUMMING DAY!


ALL SET, POP?
PRACTICALLY. HOW'S THE GUTS, SHORTY?
HUMMIN' LIKE A HUMMING-BIRD, POP. SHE'S A CINCH BET TO COAST IN.
12

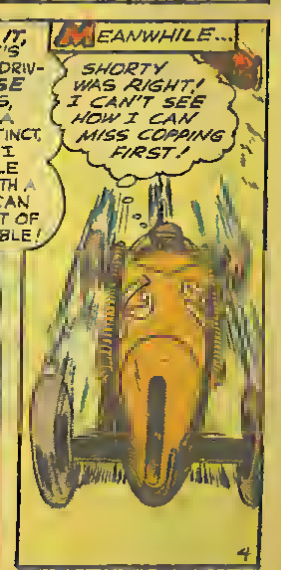

SHORTY WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO DRIVE A KIDDY CAR BUT HE KNOWS MOTORS!
REMEMBER, SMILEY, GIVE HER THE GUN WHEN YOU PASS THE SHED ON THE LAST LAP. SHE'LL TAKE OFF FOR YOU!
12

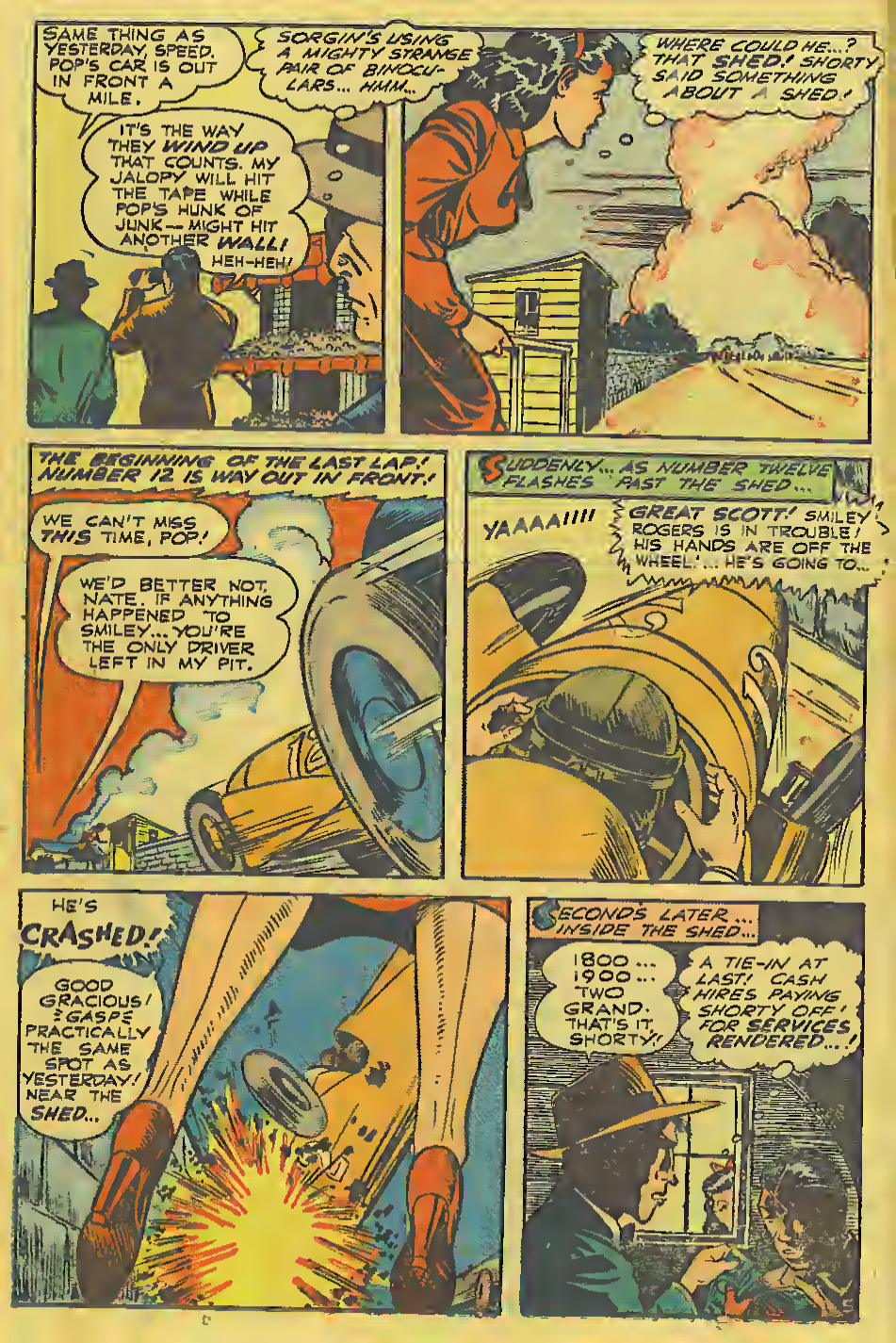

AW, WHAT DOES A GREASE MONKEY LIKE YOU KNOW ABOUT DRIVING?
SURE, THE ONLY WHEEL SHORTY EVER HELD WAS A TRICYCLE!
HMM... SHORTY MUST TAKE PLENTY OF RIDING FROM THE DRIVERS! BOY IF HIS LOOKS COULD KILL!

GO!
THEY'RE OFF!
12

THAT'S IT SMILEY! BEAR DOWN ON THE BACK!
HONEY, I'M RUNNING OVER TO SORGIN'S PIT I WANT TO WATCH HIM... JUST IN CASE!
OKAY, BERT. I WANTED TO KEEP AN EYE ON SOMEONE MYSELF... WHY... WHY HE'S G-GONE!

SO WHAT? ARE YOU PLAYING DETECTIVE AGAIN?
THAT'S JUST IT, MY PET. HE'S TAKEN THE DRIVER'S ABUSE FOR YEARS, TOO! JUST A WOMAN'S INSTINCT, SHERLOCK. I S Y A LITTLE MECHANIC WITH A BIG HATE CAN MAKE A LOT OF TROUBLE!


MEANWHILE...
SHORTY WAS RIGHT! I CAN'T SEE HOW I CAN MISS COPPING FIRST!


SAME THING AS YESTERDAY, SPEED. POP'S CAR IS OUT IN FRONT A MILE.
SORGIN'S USING A MIGHTY STRANGE PAIR OF BINOCULARS... HMM...
IT'S THE WAY THEY WIND UP THAT COUNTS. MY JALOPY WILL HIT THE TAPE WHILE POP'S HUNK OF JUNK— MIGHT HIT ANOTHER WALL! HEH-HEH!
WHERE COULD HE...? THAT SHED! SHORTY SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A SHED!
THE BEGINNING OF THE LAST LAP! NUMBER 12 IS WAY OUT IN FRONT!
WE CAN'T MISS THIS TIME, POP!
WE'D BETTER NOT, NATE. IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO SMILEY... YOU'RE THE ONLY DRIVER LEFT IN MY PIT.
SUDDENLY... AS NUMBER TWELVE FLASHES PAST THE SHED...
YAAAA!!!!
GREAT SCOTT! SMILEY ROGERS IS IN TROUBLE! HIS HANDS ARE OFF THE WHEEL!... HE'S GOING TO...
HE'S CRASHED!
GOOD GRACIOUS! GASPS PRACTICALLY THE SAME SPOT AS YESTERDAY! NEAR THE SHED...
SECONDS LATER... INSIDE THE SHED...
1800... 1900... TWO GRAND. THAT'S IT, SHORTY!
A TIE-IN AT LAST! CASH HIRES PAYING SHORTY OFF! FOR SERVICES RENDERED...!

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE SOMETHING OF A PROPHET, SORGIN. MIND IF I SEE THOSE GLASSES? IT MIGHT BE THE STUFF THEY MAKE CRYSTAL BALLS OUT OF.
SURE. LOOK ALL YOU LIKE. YOU MIGHT FIND A DEATH RAY INSIDE...

OR A LITTLE BUTTON THAT FLASHES AN X-RAY! ANYWAY, SOMETHIN' TO MAKE THE DRIVER CRASH. I READ THE COMIC BOOKS, TOO.
I DON'T LAUGH OFF CUSTOM-MADE BINOCULARS, SORGIN... HMM... HMMMM...
BERT!

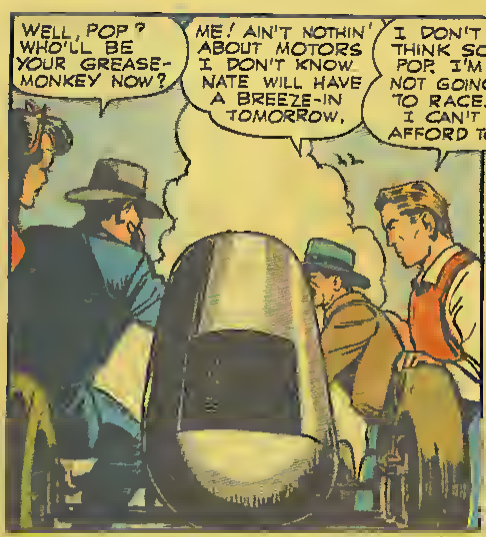
BRIGHT BOY IS A DETECTIVE! DIDN'T YOU KNOW THAT?
CASH HIRES JUST PAID OFF, SHORTY, IN THAT SHED! I SAW IT!
THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO ADD UP! LET'S GO!

CASH HIRES JUST PAID SHORTY $2000. YOU GUESS FOR WHAT.
YOU, LYIN' SKIRT! I'LL...

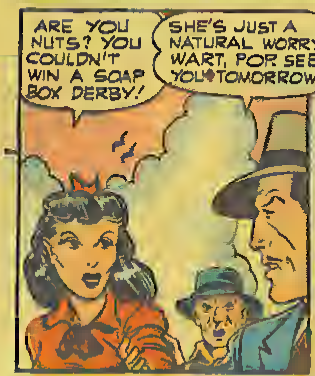
THE MURDERER! I'LL FIX HIM! I'LL TEAR HIS HIDE APART!
EASY, POP.
SURE HIRES PAID ME TWO GRAND! THERE'S NO LAW AGAINST ME BETTIN' IS THERE? POP AIN'T WON A RACE IN THIRTY YEARS! THE BET WAS A SURE THING!
POP

POP PAYS ME PEANUTS! HE'LL NEVER CLEAN UP TO PAY BETTER! SURE, I BET AGAINST HIM... AN' I'LL DO IT AGAIN!
GET OUT! GET OUT BEFORE I KILL YOU!...

YOU'LL NEVER WIN, YOU OLD BUZZARD! AN' EVERY DRIVER OF YOURS WILL CROAK TRYIN' TO MAKE YOU WIN ... !

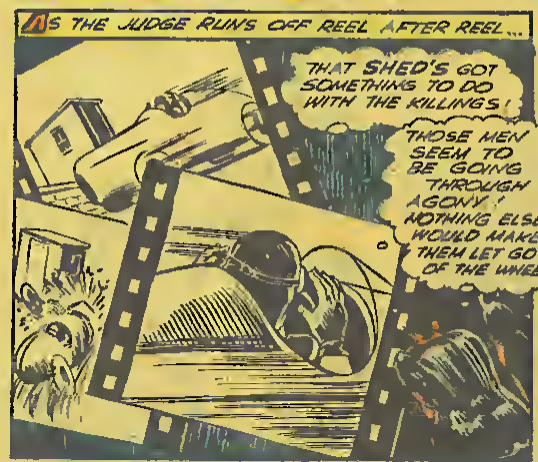

WELL, POP? WHO'LL BE YOUR GREASE-MONKEY NOW?
ME! AIN'T NOTHIN' ABOUT MOTORS I DON'T KNOW. NATE WILL HAVE A BREEZE-IN TOMORROW.
I DON'T THINK SO, POP. I'M NOT GOING TO RACE. I CAN'T AFFORD TO.

I'M MARRIED... WITH TWO KIDS. WHETHER IT'S YOUR LUCK OR WHETHER SOMEBODY'S MURDERIN' YOUR DRIVERS, I AIN'T STICKIN MY NECK OUT TO FIND OUT. SORRY, POP!
I CAN'T BLAME YOU, NATE. WHOMEVER'S KILLIN' OFF MY BOYS WILL GO AFTER THE THIRD ONE.
MEANING ME!


ARE YOU NUTS? YOU COULDN'T WIN A SOAP BOX DERBY!
SHE'S JUST A NATURAL WORRY-WART, POP. SEE YOU TOMORROW!

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO PUT YOUR FINGER ON THE KILLER! YOU'LL PUT YOUR FOOT IN THE GRAVE!
I'M GLAD YOU DISPLAY SUCH CONFIDENCE IN ME, DEAREST. FOR THAT I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE MOVIES. HMM... WE'LL JUST ABOUT MAKE IT!

AN HOUR LATER...
JUDGE, THIS IS MY WIFE! SHE EXPECTS TO BE A WIDOW TOMORROW!
EXPECT? I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT! HMM...
WE'RE READY TO RUN THE OFFICIAL RACE PICTURES, BERT!


AS THE JUDGE RUNS OFF REEL AFTER REEL...
THAT SHED'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE KILLINGS!
THOSE MEN SEEM TO BE GOING THROUGH AGONY! NOTHING ELSE WOULD MAKE THEM LET GO OF THE WHEEL!

LATER THAT NIGHT...
CAN'T SLEEP EITHER, EH, BERT? I'M WORRIED ABOUT TOMORROW ...ABOUT... DO YOU HEAR ME? OR ARE YOU STILL COUNTING SHEEP?
SHEEP? I'M COUNTING SUSPECTS! FOUR OF THEM. ANY ONE OF THEM MAY BE THE KILLER!

THE NEXT AFTERNOON...

WELL, HONEY, AT LEAST YOU DREW A CAR WITH A LUCKY NUMBER...

SHE'S LUCKY INSIDE, TOO! TIP-TOP! BUT BERT STILL DON'T HAVE TO RACE HER. WINNIN' A RACE AIN'T WORTH LOSIN' A LIFE!

NONSENSE, POP. HAVE YOU GOT A SPARE UNIFORM? I GUESS NATE'S ABOUT MY SIZE!

HERE'S YOUR HELMET.

THANKS, POP. BYE, SUE. SEE YOU IN THE MORGUE. YOU'LL RECOGNIZE ME BY THE PINK TAG ON MY TOE!

DON'T EVEN JOKE ABOUT IT, YOU DOPE!

POP, I MUST GET DOWN TO THE SHED BEFORE THE LAST LAP! I'VE A HUNCH THE SHED HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE CRACK-UPS!

SURE, SUE. I'LL DRIVE YOU THERE!

THEY'RE OFF! THEY'RE OFF!

LAP AFTER LAP WHIZZES BY AS BERT BURNS UP THE TRACK! FACES WHIZ BY HIM, TOO! FACES OF MEN WITH MURDER ON THEIR MINDS!

TALK ABOUT HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF! POP JORGENS' CAR NO 11 IS RUNNING AWAY WITH THE RACE AS USUAL!

SO FAR, SO GOOD! =GULPE... LAST LAP COMING UP! TH-THAT'S WHERE ALL THE TROUBLE BEGINS!

THERE'S NOTHING HERE, POP... NOTHING THAT COULD HARM BERT!

HERE THEY COME! THEY'RE MAKING THE TURN FOR THE LAST LAP!

SUDDENLY... AS THE SHED COMES UP... A SHRIEK LIKE A THOUSAND BANSHEES HOWLING AT ONCE!

EEEEEEEEEE!

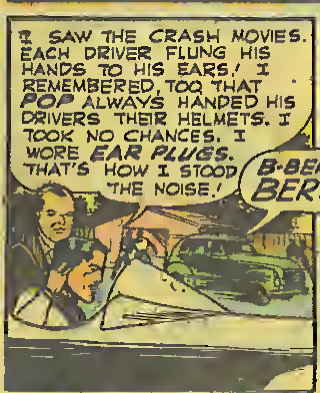
THAT'S IT! GREAT SCOTT! I MUSTN'T TAKE MY HANDS OFF THE WHEEL... I MUSTN'T!

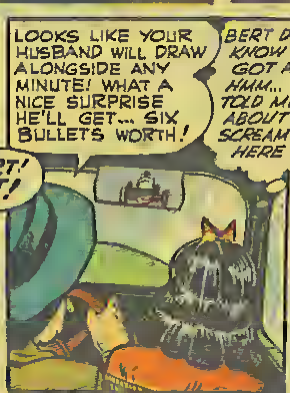
HE MADE IT! BERT'S GOING ON TO WIN!

GET YOUR HANDS UP AND GET INTO THE CAR OUTSIDE! I MEAN BUSINESS ... JUST AS I'VE MEANT IT ALL ALONG!

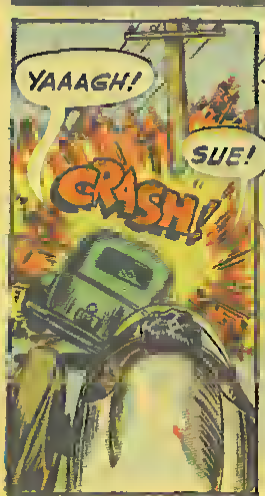
THE WINNER! NUMBER 11 !!
GREAT GUNS! WHAT THE DEVIL IS THAT SCREAMING NOISE?
IT'S COMING FROM THE DRIVER! BUT HIS MOUTH ISN'T OPEN! (GASPS)
EEEEEE!
OFFICIAL
OFFICIAL

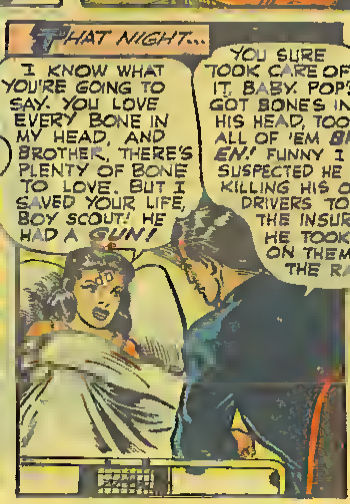
LOOK AT IT! THIS HORRIBLE SHRIEK SHOCKED TUMAY AND ROGERS INTO TAKING THEIR HANDS OFF THE WHEEL AT 100 MILES AN HOUR! POP JORGENS KNEW EXACTLY HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE HIS RACER TO REACH THE SHED WITH THROTTLE OPEN, SO HE SET THIS TIME GADGET ACCORDINGLY!
EEE!


I SAW THE CRASH MOVIES. EACH DRIVER FLUNG HIS HANDS TO HIS EARS! I REMEMBERED, TOO THAT POP ALWAYS HANDED HIS DRIVERS THEIR HELMETS. I TOOK NO CHANCES. I WORE EAR PLUGS. THAT'S HOW I STOOD THE NOISE!
B-BERT! BERT!


LOOKS LIKE YOUR HUSBAND WILL DRAW ALONGSIDE ANY MINUTE! WHAT A NICE SURPRISE HE'LL GET... SIX BULLETS WORTH!
BERT DOESN'T KNOW HE'S GOT A GUN! HMM... POP TOLD ME ABOUT THAT SCREAM GADGET! HERE GOES!

YEEOW!

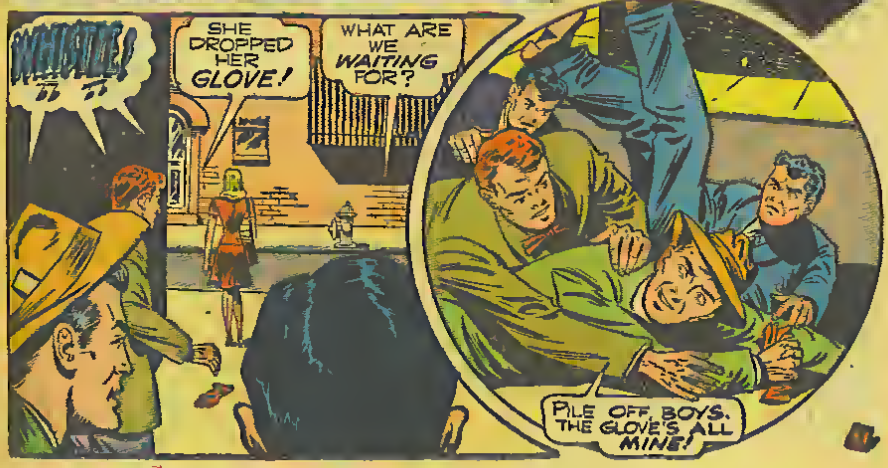

YAAAGH!
SUE!
CRASH!

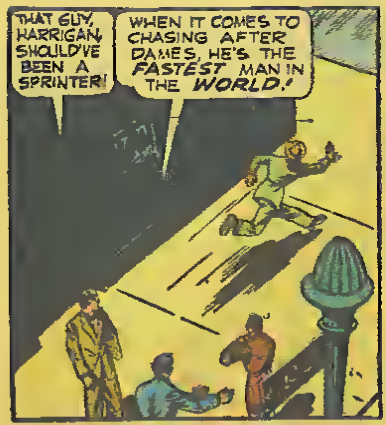

THAT NIGHT...
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY. YOU LOVE EVERY BONE IN MY HEAD, AND BROTHER, THERE'S PLENTY OF BONE TO LOVE. BUT I SAVED YOUR LIFE, BOY SCOUT! HE HAD A GUN!
YOU SURE TOOK CARE OF IT, BABY. POP'S GOT BONES IN HIS HEAD, TOO— ALL OF 'EM BROKEN! FUNNY I NEVER SUSPECTED HE WAS KILLING HIS OWN DRIVERS TO GET THE INSURANCE HE TOOK OUT ON THEM AND THE RACES!

SHORTY USED THE SHED SO NOBODY COULD SEE HIM GET PAID OFF. SORGIN HONESTLY BELIEVED POP COULDN'T WIN A RACE— THOUGH I DISPROVED THAT THEORY! AND CASH WAS JUST A GAMBLER WHO PLAYED HIS HUN... H-HUH?
STOP SOLVING CASES! SOLVE THIS ONE... WHO WANTS TO BE KISSED...? ME! MMM...

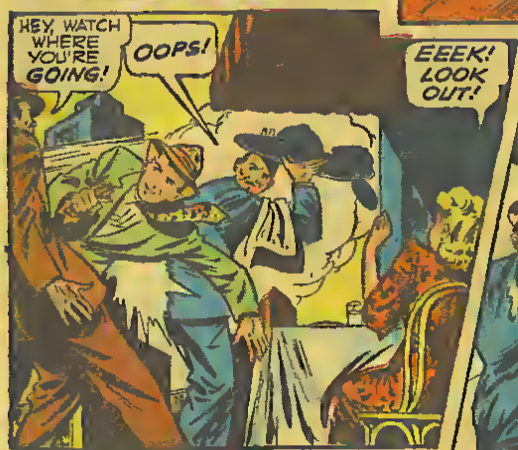
HURRY-UP HARRIGAN

Did you ever whistle at a pretty girl? Hurry-Up Harrigan, the demon reporter did...an innocent little whistle which didn't bring the girl, but instead, brought the grim spectre of DEATH!... which also had him tagged on its murder list in... "The CASE OF THE STOLEN BRACELET!"



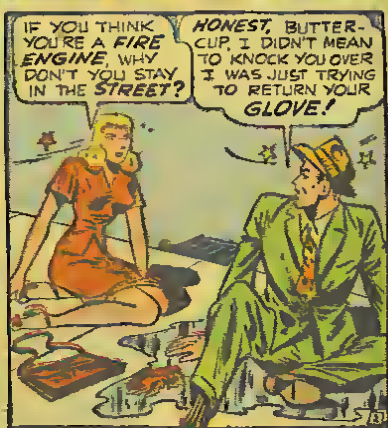

THAT GUY, HARRIGAN, SHOULD'VE BEEN A SPRINTER!
WHEN IT COMES TO CHASING AFTER DAMES, HE'S THE FASTEST MAN IN THE WORLD!

HEY, WHATSA MATTER, YA COLOR BLIND? DON'T YA SEE D'LIGHT IS GREEN?
MY APOLOGIES, OLD MAN, BUT I'M IN AN EXTRA SPECIAL HURRY!


HEY, WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
OOPS!
EEEK! LOOK OUT!

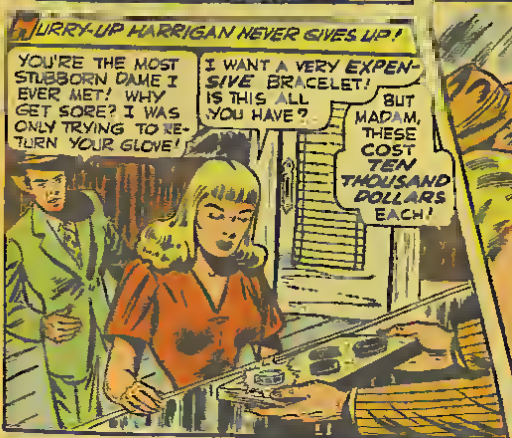
AWFUL SORRY, PAL! YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO CLUMSY!

OH, MISS, YOU DROPPED YOUR. OOOPS!


IF YOU THINK YOU'RE A FIRE ENGINE, WHY DON'T YOU STAY IN THE STREET?
HONEST, BUTTER-CUP, I DIDN'T MEAN TO KNOCK YOU OVER I WAS JUST TRYING TO RETURN YOUR GLOVE!

SEE... HERE IT IS!
SUCH NERVE! MY GLOVE IS RUINED!

YOU GOT ME ALL WRONG DREAMBOAT! I DIDN'T KNOCK IT OUT OF YOUR HAND. I JUST RAN HALF A MILE TO... OUCH!
TAKE THAT, FRESH GUY! NOW SCRAM BEFORE I CALL A COP!


HURRY-UP HARRIGAN NEVER GIVES UP!
YOU'RE THE MOST STUBBORN DAME I EVER MET! WHY GET SORE? I WAS ONLY TRYING TO RETURN YOUR GLOVE!
I WANT A VERY EXPENSIVE BRACELET! IS THIS ALL YOU HAVE?
BUT MADAM, THESE COST TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH!

SUDDENLY...
UP WITH YOUR HANDS, EVERYBODY. THIS IS A HOLD-UP! DON'T NOBODY OPEN HIS TRAP OR I SHOOTS T' KILL!

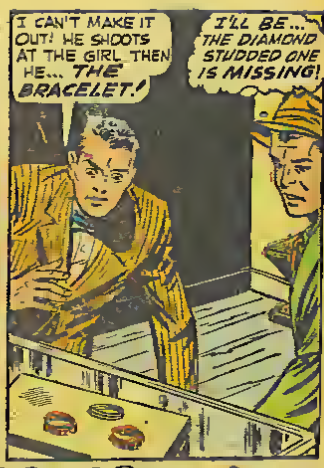
OKAY, YOU! OPEN THE SAFE!
B-B-BUT THERE'S N-N-NOTHING IN THE SAFE!

HELP! POLICE! HELP!

I TOLD YA T' KEEP YER TRAP SHUT! MAYBE A DOSE OF LEAD WILL CLOSE IT FOR YA!

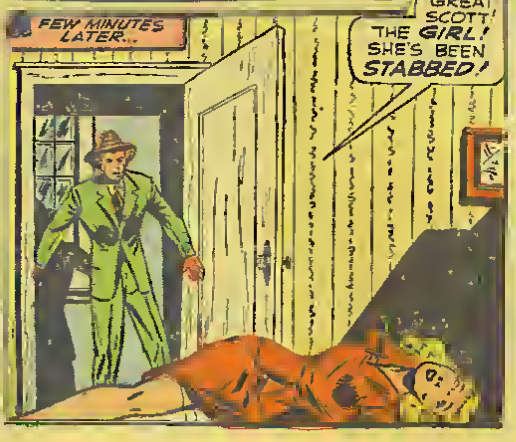
SHE HASN'T A SCRATCH ON HER. HE MUST'VE FIRED BLANKS!
HER EYES ARE OPENING!

YOU'RE SHAKING ALL OVER, HONEY BETTER LET ME TAKE YOU HOME!
NO, THANKS I'LL BE OKAY I JUST PASSED OUT, I GUESS!


I CAN'T MAKE IT OUT! HE SHOOTS AT THE GIRL THEN HE... THE BRACELET!
I'LL BE... THE DIAMOND STUDDED ONE IS MISSING!

AN ENVELOPE! IT'S GOT A DAME'S NAME AND ADDRESS ON IT. SHE MUST'VE DROPPED IT OUT OF HER POCKETBOOK!

HARRIGAN, M'BOY, THIS CALLS FOR SOME FANCY LEG WORK!


FEW MINUTES LATER...
GREAT SCOTT! THE GIRL! SHE'S BEEN STABBED!

WHAT'S THIS? A DIAMOND!

LATER, AT THE POLICE STATION

TELL YOUR PAPERS THE *JEWELRY STORE THIEF* IS AS GOOD AS *CAUGHT!*

SERGEANT, THERE'S BEEN A JEWELRY ROBBERY AND *MURDER!*

HO! HO! SO THERE'S BEEN A *MURDER!* WE GOT THE NEWS ON THAT FAKE JEWELRY STORE SHOOTIN' AN HOUR AGO. HURRY UP AND GET BORN, *HARRIGAN!* I GOTTA TELL THE LIEUTENANT THIS ONE!

GIVE UP, HARRIGAN. THAT JEWELRY ROBBERY IS ANCIENT HISTORY. IF YOU'D SPEND LESS TIME CHASING DAMES, MAYBE YOU'D BE ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE NEWS!

SO, YOU CHARACTERS KNOW *ALL* ABOUT IT, EH?

R-RING!

HELLO, *POLICE HEADQUARTERS?* MIDTOWN JEWELRY APPRAISERS CALLING. THERE'S A MAN HERE WHO MATCHES THE RADIO DESCRIPTION OF THE *JEWELRY STORE THIEF!* HE WANTS TO SELL A DIAMOND *BRACELET.* CAN YOU COME RIGHT OVER?

I'LL BE RIGHT OVER! ASK THE GUY TO LEAVE THE BRACELET AND COME BACK IN AN HOUR. TELL HIM YOU NEED TO EXAMINE IT!

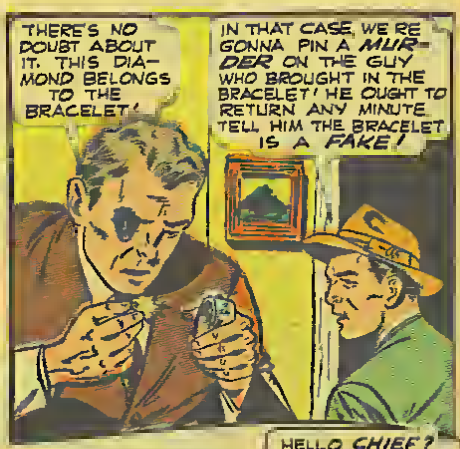
THAT WAS YOUR WIFE, SARGE! SHE WANTS YOU HOME EARLY!

MY WIFE? B-BUT SHE'S OUT OF TOWN! JUMPIN' JALOPIES! IS *SHE* BACK?

HOWDY! I GOT YOUR MESSAGE AT HEADQUARTERS!

GLAD TO SEE YOU, SIR! HERE'S THE BRACELET! I TOLD HIM TO COME BACK *LATER!*

THERE'S ONE DIAMOND MISSING! IF THE ONE I HAVE FITS...


THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. THIS DIAMOND BELONGS TO THE BRACELET!
IN THAT CASE, WE'RE GONNA PIN A MURDER ON THE GUY WHO BROUGHT IN THE BRACELET! HE OUGHT TO RETURN ANY MINUTE. TELL HIM THE BRACELET IS A FAKE!

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? THIS PIECE IS WORTH ABOUT TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS!
HE DOESN'T HAVE TO KNOW IT! YOU TELL HIM IT'S NOT WORTH FIFTY CENTS AND I'LL DO THE REST!

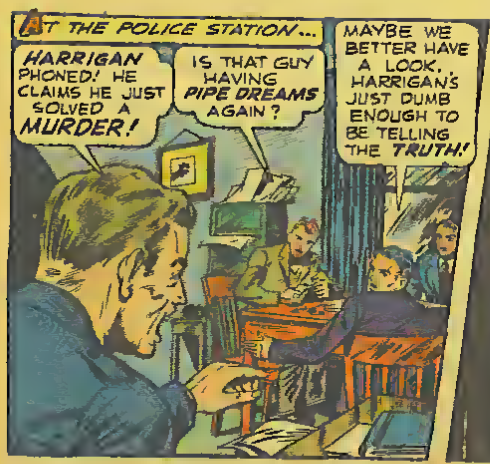
WHEN THE KILLER GETS THE BAD NEWS, HE'LL BE HERE! I BETTER CALL THE POLICE!

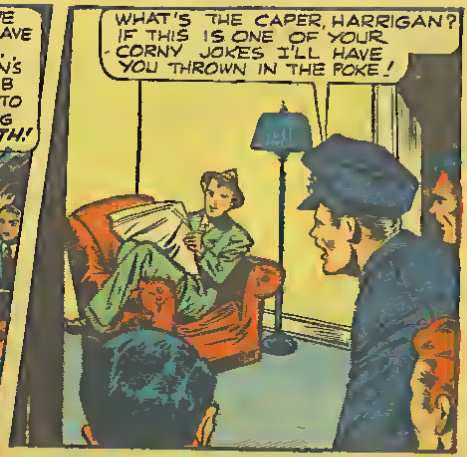
HELLO CHIEF? HARRIGAN SPEAKING. KEEP THE PRESSES OPEN FOR AN EXTRA! OH... OH! HOLD ON, SOMEBODY'S COMING!

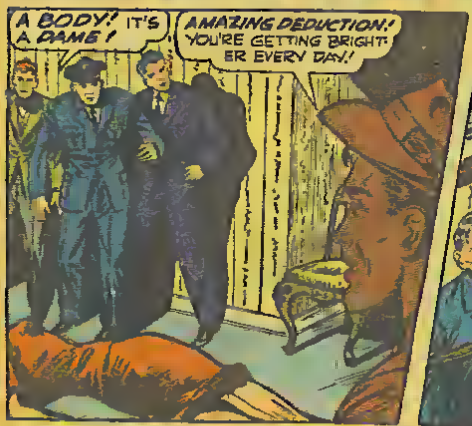
HELLO. HELLO! THAT GUY WILL DRIVE ME NUTS! WHAT IN BLAZES IS HE UP TO NOW?

YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, BUB. YOU WON'T FIND IT THERE. THE BRACELET YOU WANT IS RIGHT IN YOUR POCKET!

NAUGHTY! NAUGHTY! PEOPLE WHO PLAY WITH GUNS GET HURT!

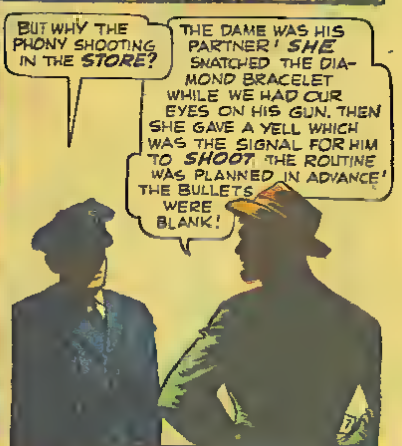

AT THE POLICE STATION...
HARRIGAN PHONED! HE CLAIMS HE JUST SOLVED A MURDER!
IS THAT GUY HAVING PIPE DREAMS AGAIN?
MAYBE WE BETTER HAVE A LOOK. HARRIGAN'S JUST DUMB ENOUGH TO BE TELLING THE TRUTH!

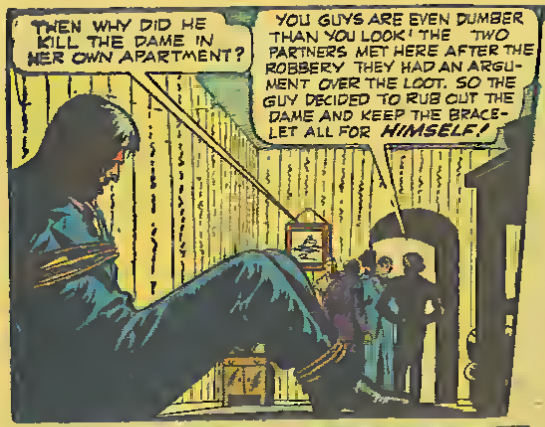

WHAT'S THE CAPER, HARRIGAN? IF THIS IS ONE OF YOUR CORNY JOKES I'LL HAVE YOU THROWN IN THE POKE!


A BODY! IT'S A DAME!
AMAZING DEDUCTION! YOU'RE GETTING BRIGHTER EVERY DAY!

HERE'S YOUR KILLER, SARGE! HE'S ALSO THE GUY WHO FIRED TWO BLANK SHOTS AT HER IN THE JEWELRY STORE THIS MORNING HOW DO I KNOW? SIMPLE, GENTLEMEN.

I WAS THERE WHEN IT HAPPENED!
WHAT?
HUH?


BUT WHY THE PHONY SHOOTING IN THE STORE?
THE DAME WAS HIS PARTNER! SHE SNATCHED THE DIAMOND BRACELET WHILE WE HAD OUR EYES ON HIS GUN. THEN SHE GAVE A YELL WHICH WAS THE SIGNAL FOR HIM TO SHOOT. THE ROUTINE WAS PLANNED IN ADVANCE! THE BULLETS WERE BLANK!


THEN WHY DID HE KILL THE DAME IN HER OWN APARTMENT?
YOU GUYS ARE EVEN DUMBER THAN YOU LOOK! THE TWO PARTNERS MET HERE AFTER THE ROBBERY THEY HAD AN ARGUMENT OVER THE LOOT. SO THE GUY DECIDED TO RUB OUT THE DAME AND KEEP THE BRACELET ALL FOR HIMSELF!

BUT WHEN THE KILLER TRIED TO SELL THE BRACELET, I HAD THE APPRAISER WHO WAS ON THE PHONE TELL HIM IT WAS WORTHLESS. THINKING HE GRABBED THE WRONG PIECE FROM THE DAME, HE RETURNE HERE FOR ANOTHER LOOK. RELAX, SARGE. YOUR WIFE'S STILL OUT OF TOWN!

HEY YOU GUYS, DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME! COME BACK HERE!

THE STORY IS ALREADY ON THE STANDS! DID YOU DEADBEATS THINK I'D CALL YOU AT THE STATION HOUSE BEFORE PHONING THE DAILY BLADE? HARRIGAN WASN'T BORN YESTERDAY! HERE Y'ARE GENTS, READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Daily Blade
BLADE REPORTER CAPTURES KILLER AT SCENE OF CRIME
HARRIGAN, ACE REPORTER GIVES EXCLUSIVE VERSION

I'LL SEE YOU BEANHEADS LATER. CALL ME UP WHEN YOU GET FIRED. MAYBE WE CAN USE SOME COPY BOYS AT THE DAILY BLADE! HEH! HEH!

WHO-DUN-IT?

AN INSPECTOR KEENE MYSTERY!

JOSHUA JORDAN WAS IN HIS STUDY ONE NIGHT

WHEN SUDDENLY...

AAGH!

MOMENTS LATER...

WHA?... GOOD HEAVENS!

HELLO?... INSPECTOR KEENE? THIS IS HIGGINS, THE BUTLER AT THE JORDAN MANSION! MR. JORDAN HAS BEEN MURDERED!

WHAT!... HOLD EVERYTHING! I'LL BE RIGHT OVER!

PRESENTLY...

YOU MENTIONED OVER THE PHONE THAT MR. JORDAN WAS MURDERED! WHAT MADE YOU THINK SO, HIGGINS?

WH-W-WHY, I JUST ASSUMED...

THE MURDERER IS THE NEPHEW! HE KILLED HIS UNCLE BECAUSE HE HAD ACCUMULATED LARGE GAMBLING DEBTS WITH LOGAN AND KNEW BY ELIMINATING HIS RELATIVE HE WOULD BE THE HEIR TO HIS ESTATE. WHEN INSPECTOR KEENE DISCOVERED A MONOCLE NEAR THE BODY HE PLACED IT ON A TABLE AND ASKED THE OTHERS: TO READ A BLANK "LETTER" THE NEPHEW FROM A NATURAL HABIT PICKED UP THE MONOCLE FROM THE TABLE TO READ THE "LETTER" THAT CLUE GAVE HIM AWAY!

MR. RISK

"The GHOST LIGHTHOUSE!"

"All who work here must die!"... so went the mysterious curse on Cape Calamity lighthouse. Endless murders occurred to prove the power of the curse until Mr. Risk decided to risk the curse himself! Then everything began to happen and... But you better read about it yourself!

A COAST GUARD OFFICE IN NEW ENGLAND...

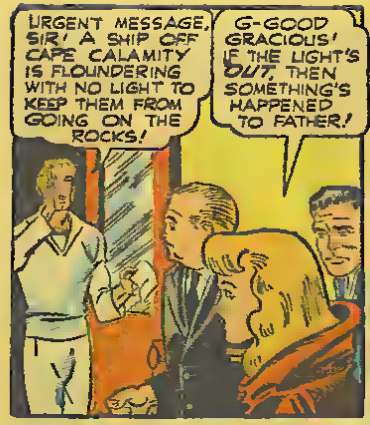
MY FATHER SAYS HE CAN'T STAY AT CAPE CALAMITY ...NOT AFTER HE FOUND OUT ABOUT THE CURSE!

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS MR. RISK! WE'VE HAD TREMENDOUS TROUBLE GETTING KEEPERS TO STAY THERE AFTER FOUR DEATHS IN A ROW!

HOW DID IT OCCUR, CAPTAIN?

IN EACH CASE, THE DEAD KEEPER WAS FOUND AT THE BASE OF THE TOWER. THE LIGHT WAS OUT JUST WHEN WE NEEDED IT MOST... AT THE HEIGHT OF A STORM.

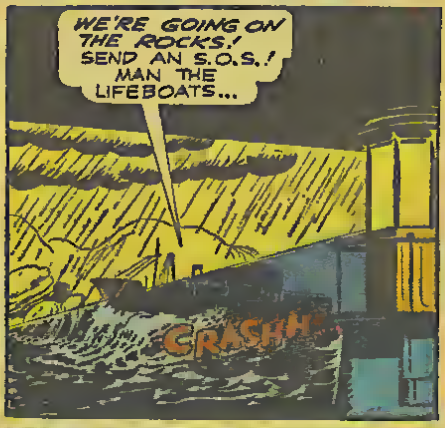
STRANGE. THE BAROMETER IS FALLING EVERYWHERE... AND CAPE CALAMITY IS PARTICULARLY HARD HIT.

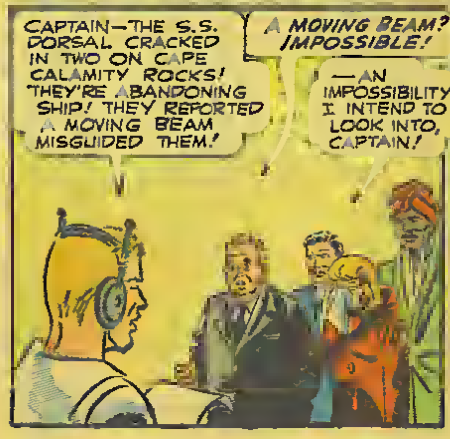

URGENT MESSAGE, SIR! A SHIP OFF CAPE CALAMITY IS FLOUNDERING WITH NO LIGHT TO KEEP THEM FROM GOING ON THE ROCKS!
G-GOOD GRACIOUS! IF THE LIGHT'S OUT, THEN SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO FATHER!

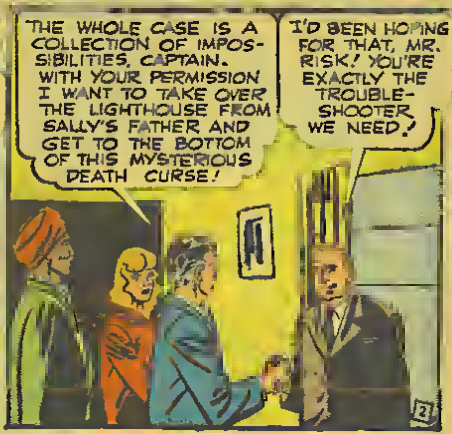
MEANWHILE, AT CAPE CALAMITY LIGHTHOUSE...
N-NO! NO! YIEEEEEE!

AND AS THE CURSE OF CAPE CALAMITY CLAIMS ANOTHER VICTIM, THE FREIGHTER SIGNALS FRANTICALLY...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE LIGHTHOUSE? WHERE IS THE LIGHT? CAN'T SEE ROCKS IN DARK!

CAPTAIN, LOOK! THERE'S THE LIGHT! NOW WE CAN GET OUR BEARINGS!
THE LIGHT APPEARS TO BE MOVING! CAN IT BE MY IMAGINATION?


WE'RE GOING ON THE ROCKS! SEND AN S.O.S.! MAN THE LIFEBOATS...
CRASH!


CAPTAIN—THE S.S. DORSAL CRACKED IN TWO ON CAPE CALAMITY ROCKS! THEY'RE ABANDONING SHIP! THEY REPORTED A MOVING BEAM MISGUIDED THEM!
A MOVING BEAM? IMPOSSIBLE!
—AN IMPOSSIBILITY I INTEND TO LOOK INTO, CAPTAIN!


THE WHOLE CASE IS A COLLECTION OF IMPOSSIBILITIES, CAPTAIN. WITH YOUR PERMISSION I WANT TO TAKE OVER THE LIGHTHOUSE FROM SALLY'S FATHER AND GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS MYSTERIOUS DEATH CURSE!
I'D BEEN HOPING FOR THAT, MR. RISK! YOU'RE EXACTLY THE TROUBLE-SHOOTER WE NEED!

YOU'RE VERY BRAVE TO TAKE MY FATHER'S POST, MR. RISK. THAT DEATH CURSE LEGEND WOULD HAVE ANYBODY WORRIED!

IN MY BOOK, CURSES DON'T KILL PEOPLE!

BE NOT TOO CERTAIN, MASTER. WE OF THE EAST HAVE KNOWN MANY CURSES THAT BRING SUDDEN DEATH!

NOT WHEN THEY'RE TIED UP WITH MOVING LIGHTS AND SHIPWRECKS, ABDUL! THERE'S TOO MUCH *LOGIC* IN THIS CURSE... *HUMAN* LOGIC!

HOURS LATER, AT DAWN...

THERE'S NO SIGN OF LIFE ON THE ISLAND, MR. RISK!

HERE, MY FRIEND. WILL THIS BE ENOUGH TO ROW US TO THE LIGHTHOUSE?

$20?! I'D ROW YE TO CAPE HORN FOR THET, SIR!

SEE ALL THET WRECKAGE? THET'S WHAT'S LEFT OF THE SHIP THE COAST GUARD TOOK OFF THE ROCKS THIS MORNIN'. BUT HER VALUABLE CARGO... *IVORY*... WENT DOWN DURIN' THE NIGHT. NEVER SEEN SO MANY WRECKS AS LATELY, NO SIR!

EVER HEAR OF THE LIGHTHOUSE CURSE, OLD-TIMER?

"WHO AIN'T IN THESE PARTS? QUITE A PIECE BACK, A KEEPER DIDN'T WANT HIS DAUGHTER TO MARRY A YOUNG FISHERMAN, SO HE REFUSED TO TURN ON THE LIGHT WHEN THE LAD'S VESSEL WAS HEADIN' FOR THE ROCKS...!"

Y-YOU'VE GOT TO TURN THE BEAM ON, FATHER! HE'LL *DIE*!

THAT'S WHAT I WANT!

"WHAT THE KEEPER WANTED CAME TO PASS..."

CRASH!!

YAAAA!

YOU MURDERED JOHN! YOU MURDERED THE ONLY MAN I EVER LOVED! YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE!

CHRISTINE! N... N-NO! NO! AAAAEEEEE!

...THEN POOR CHRISTINE DROWNED HERSELF. THEY FOUND EVERY KEEPER SINCE...ON THE ROCKS BELOW THE TOWER.

HMM... SALLY'S FATHER IS NO EXCEPTION. HE'S LYING ON THE ROCKS, TOO, AND HE'S NOT SUN-BATHING!

HE, TOO, DIE FROM FALL... FROM TOWER, MASTER.

ABDUL, HELP THE BEACHCOMBER TAKE THE BODY BACK TO LAND. I'M WIRING COAST GUARD HEADQUARTERS TO HAVE A HEARSE MEET THE ROWBOAT.

SHORTLY AFTER...

THAT'S THAT. I'M SORRY I CAN'T GO WITH YOU, SALLY. BUT I'M NEEDED HERE! I MUST GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS CURSE BUSINESS.

I'M NOT GOING, MR. RISK. IF THIS CURSE LEGEND TURNS OUT TO BE DELIBERATE MURDER, I WANT TO BE HERE WHEN THINGS START POPPING.

YOUR MASTER IS STUBBORN. IF IT WAS ME, A MILLION DOLLARS WOULDN'T MAKE ME GO NEAR THAT LIGHTHOUSE!

MY MASTER DOESN'T CARE ABOUT MONEY. MY MASTER BELIEVES EVERY MYSTERY HAS A SOLUTION. SO FAR HE'S BEEN RIGHT...

"SO FAR"... PERILOUS WORDS ... WHEN TO BE WRONG MEANS DEATH! FOR DAYS, MR. RISK SEEKS VAINLY FOR CLUES...

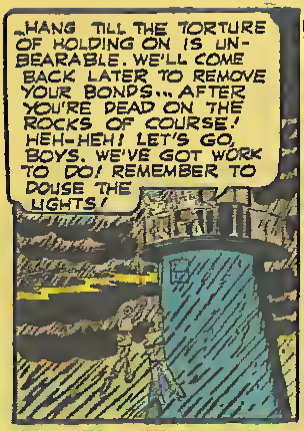
NOT A SHRED OF EVIDENCE THAT YOUR FATHER MET WITH FOUL PLAY! FRANKLY, SALLY, I'M STUMPED AND YET I CAN'T BELIEVE IN SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA.

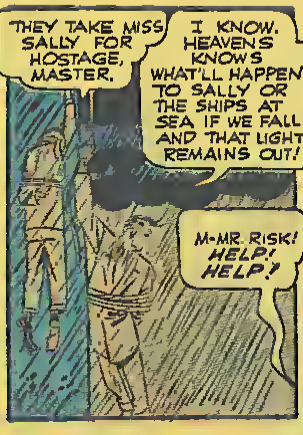
BAROMETER FALLING, MASTER. BAD STORM COMING THIS WAY.

STORM WEATHER GENERALLY ENDS UP IN DEATH AND SHIPWRECK. WE'LL SEE IF THE CURSE WORKS FOR US... IS THERE OIL IN THE LAMP, ABDUL?

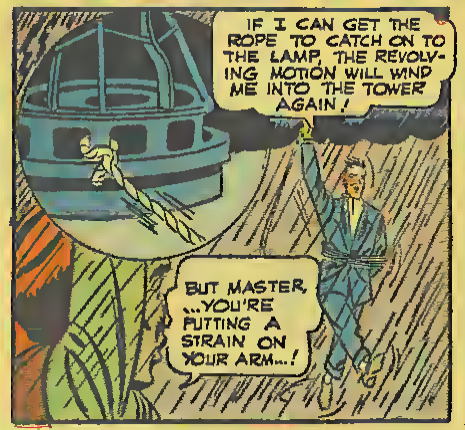
NOT SURE, MASTER... I LOOK!

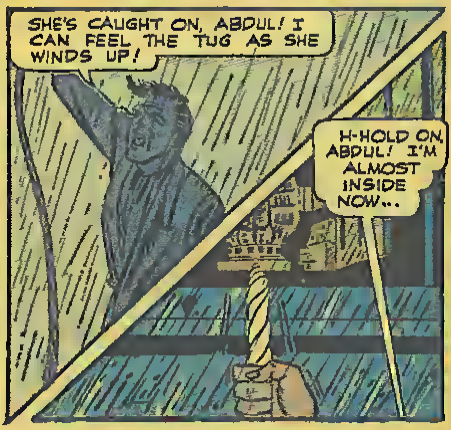
HMM...LOOKS LIKE THE PIPELINE ISN'T WORKING RIGHT NOT NEARLY ENOUGH OIL HERE!
I'LL RUN DOWN TO THE OIL ROOM AND CHECK THE PUMP.
HOW'S SHE WORKING NOW?
FINE! THE BEAM IS SHINING IN ALL ITS GLORY! COME ON UP, SALLY.
QUIET NOW ...WE DON'T WANT HER SQUALLIN'!
MMPPHHHH!
PERFECT! NOW GET THOSE TWO UPSTAIRS!
IS THAT YOU, SALLY? IT SURE TOOK YOU A LONG TIME...
YOU'LL GET DOWNSTAIRS A LOT FASTER, RISK!
M-MASTER! IT'S...
I WOULDN'T TRY NOTHIN' IF I WAS YOU, MR RISK ...NOT IF YOU DON'T WANT TURBAN-HEAD'S GUTS BLOWN OUT!
WHAT'S YOUR GAME, RATS?
DIDJA HEAR WHAT HE CALLED US, BOSS? GIVE IT TO MR. BIG-MOUTH RIGHT NOW!
AND DESTROY THE LEGEND WE'VE BUILT UP SO CONSCIENTIOUSLY? NO, FOOL THE CURSE DEMANDS THAT THE KEEPERS DIE ON THE ROCKS...
MR. RISK WAS CURIOUS. HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT OUR GAME WAS. WELL, OUR GAME IS DEATH, MR RISK! WE'RE GOING TO LET YOU AND YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT HANG FOR A WHILE...


..HANG TILL THE TORTURE OF HOLDING ON IS UNBEARABLE. WE'LL COME BACK LATER TO REMOVE YOUR BONDS... AFTER YOU'RE DEAD ON THE ROCKS OF COURSE! HEH-HEH! LET'S GO, BOYS. WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO! REMEMBER TO DOUSE THE LIGHTS!

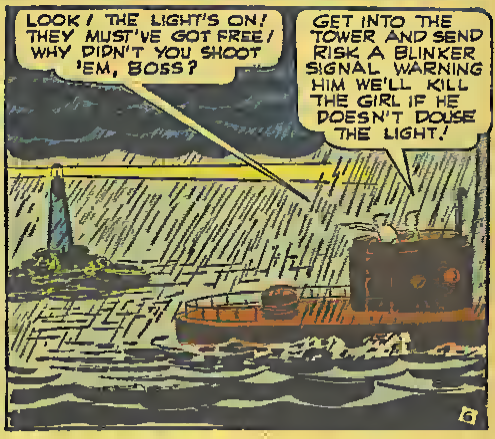

THEY TAKE MISS SALLY FOR HOSTAGE, MASTER.
I KNOW. HEAVENS KNOWS WHAT'LL HAPPEN TO SALLY OR THE SHIPS AT SEA IF WE FAIL AND THAT LIGHT REMAINS OUT!
M-MR. RISK! HELP! HELP!

GROAN...
C-CAN'T HOLD ON M-MUCH LONGER, MASTER... M-MY FINGERS ARE SLIPPING...
YOU'VE GOT TO H-HOLD ON, ABDUL! WAIT... I HEAR SOMETHING! THEY TURNED OUT THE BULBS BUT THEY FORGOT TO STOP THE THE LAMP FROM REVOLVING.


IF I CAN GET THE ROPE TO CATCH ON TO THE LAMP, THE REVOLVING MOTION WILL WIND ME INTO THE TOWER AGAIN!
BUT MASTER, ...YOU'RE PUTTING A STRAIN ON YOUR ARM...!


SHE'S CAUGHT ON, ABDUL! I CAN FEEL THE TUG AS SHE WINDS UP!
H-HOLD ON, ABDUL! I'M ALMOST INSIDE NOW...

MINUTES LATER...
NOT A SECOND TOO SOON, ABDUL. NOT ONLY FOR US... BUT FOR THAT SHIP HEADING FOR THE ROCKS! WE'VE GOT JUST ENOUGH TIME TO TURN ON THE BEAM...


LOOK! THE LIGHT'S ON! THEY MUST'VE GOT FREE! WHY DIDN'T YOU SHOOT 'EM, BOSS?
GET INTO THE TOWER AND SEND RISK A BLINKER SIGNAL WARNING HIM WE'LL KILL THE GIRL IF HE DOESN'T DOUSE THE LIGHT!

WHAT WE DO, MASTER? TURN OUT LIGHT AND SAVE GIRL OR LEAVE LIGHT ON AND SAVE SHIP?

IF I CAN RESCUE SALLY BEFORE THAT FREIGHTER REACHES THE ROCKS, YOU CAN SNAP ON THE BEAM WHEN YOU GET AN ALL-CLEAR SIGNAL FROM ME...

SOMEWHERE AT SEA IS A GHOST LIGHTHOUSE... INHABITED BY THE SAME "GHOSTS" WHO KIDNAPPED SALLY! JUST KEEP ALERT FOR SIGNALS, ABDUL!

BUT, MASTER, YOU ARE ONE AGAINST MANY...

SURELY I SHALL NEVER SEE MY MASTER ALIVE AGAIN! HOW CAN HE SURVIVE THE SEAS OR THOSE MEN ARMED WITH MACHINE GUNS?

THE SAILOR WHO SAID HE SAW A MOVING LIGHTHOUSE KNEW HIS ONIONS! THE DARN THING'S HEADED MY WAY!

IT'S A FLOATING ISLAND WITH A LIGHTHOUSE ON TOP! DELIBERATELY MOVING SO THAT THE FREIGHTER WILL HIT THE ROCKS!.. WELL, I'LL FIX THAT!

THESE HAND GRENADES HE HAS WILL COME IN HANDY...

THERE SHE GOES..... STRAIGHT FOR THE REEFS! ANOTHER VALUABLE CARGO DUMPED IN OUR LAPS!

URGHHH!

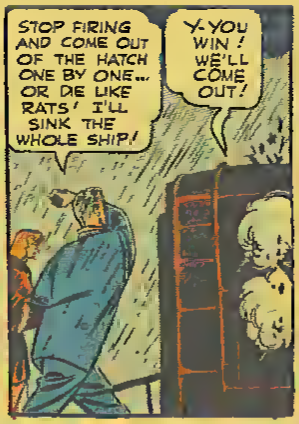
RAISE 'EM! I'VE GOT NO LEGEND TO PRESERVE, PAL, SO I DON'T MIND USING GUNS ON YOU!

RISK!... QUICK! DOWN THE HATCH! HE'LL NEVER HAVE A CHANCE IN THESE HEAVY SEAS IF WE SUBMERGE!

IT'S A SUBMARINE! WE'LL BE DROWNED!

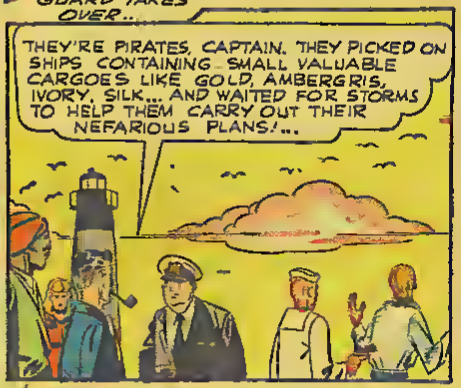
NO, SALLY... NOT AS LONG AS THESE HAND GRENADES CAN HELP US!...

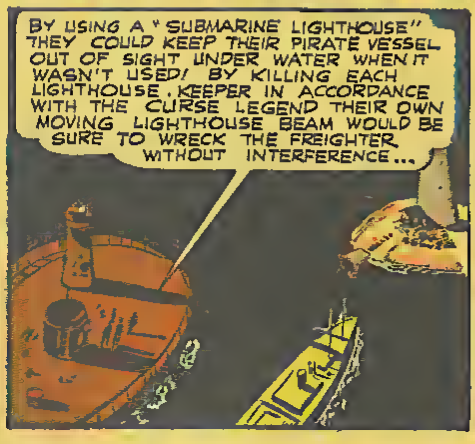
GO AHEAD AND DIVE! YOU'LL DROWN AS FAST AS WE WILL WITH THOSE HOLES IN YOUR FANCY SUB!
BOOM


STOP FIRING AND COME OUT OF THE HATCH ONE BY ONE... OR DIE LIKE RATS! I'LL SINK THE WHOLE SHIP!
Y-YOU WIN! WE'LL COME OUT!

IT'S TIME WE SAW WHAT THOSE MASKS ARE HIDING! ESPECIALLY, THE ONE ON THE BIG SHOT'S FACE. WILL YOU OBLIGE, SALLY?
WITH PLEASURE!

T-THE BEACHCOMBER!
YOU MEAN PIRATE, SALLY! BUT BEFORE I DO MY EXPLAINING BLINK OUT AN "ALL SAFE" SIGNAL TO ABDUL SO HE CAN TURN ON THE BEAM FOR THAT FREIGHTER!


THE NEXT MORNING, AS THE COAST GUARD TAKES OVER..
THEY'RE PIRATES, CAPTAIN. THEY PICKED ON SHIPS CONTAINING SMALL VALUABLE CARGOES LIKE GOLD, AMBERGRIS, IVORY, SILK... AND WAITED FOR STORMS TO HELP THEM CARRY OUT THEIR NEFARIOUS PLANS!...


BY USING A "SUBMARINE LIGHTHOUSE" THEY COULD KEEP THEIR PIRATE VESSEL OUT OF SIGHT UNDER WATER WHEN IT WASN'T USED! BY KILLING EACH LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CURSE LEGEND THEIR OWN MOVING LIGHTHOUSE BEAM WOULD BE SURE TO WRECK THE FREIGHTER WITHOUT INTERFERENCE...

MR RISK, BY LIVING UP TO YOUR NAME YOU'VE SMASHED THE MOST AMAZING RING OF PIRATES IN COAST GUARD HISTORY!
WE'VE REWARD ENOUGH IN AVENGING SALLY'S FATHER... AND YES IN PROVING THAT CURSES AREN'T REAL!